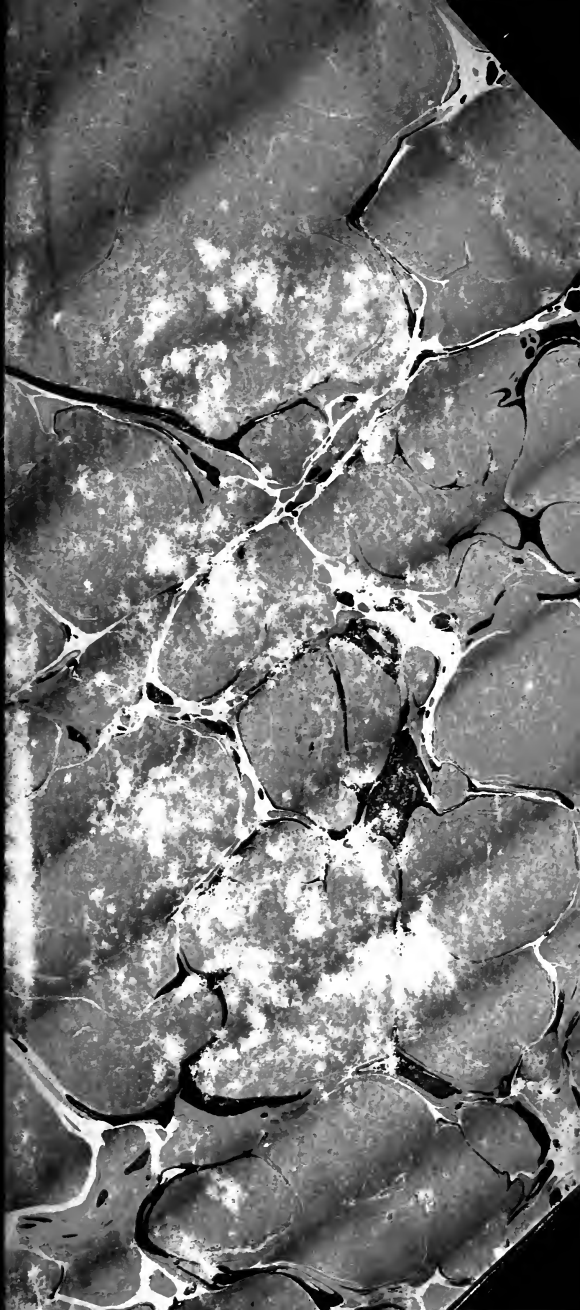


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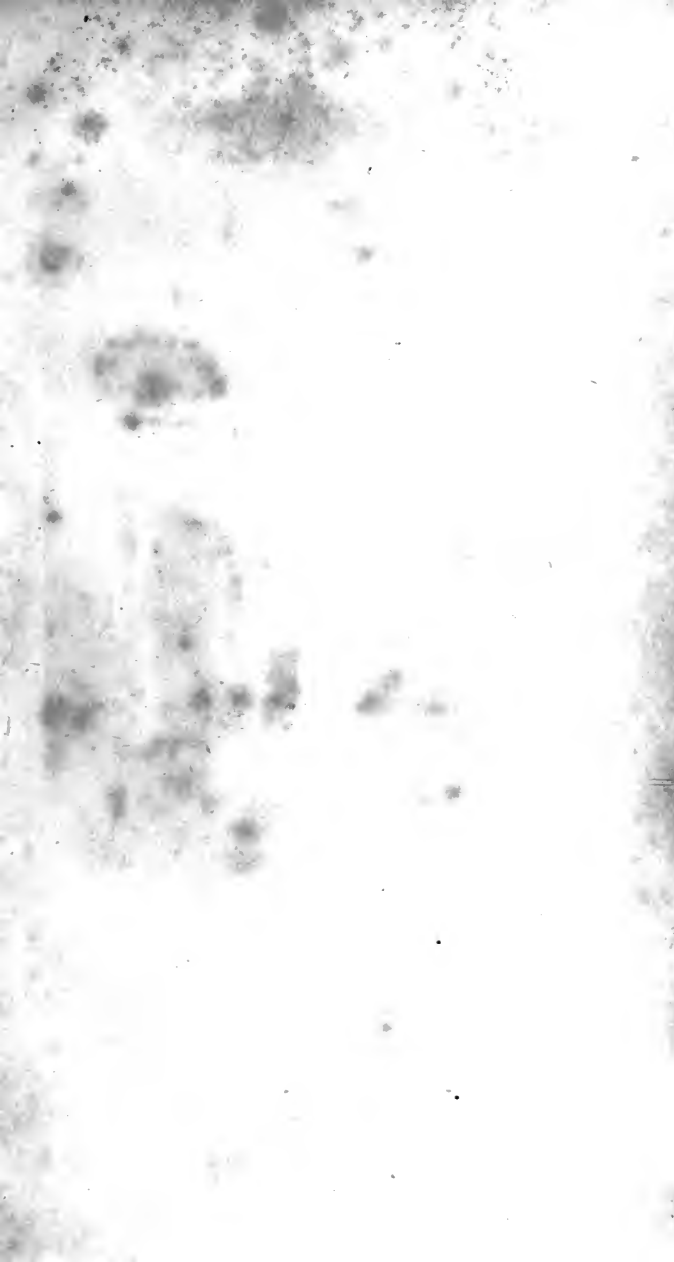




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FRONTISPIECE.



Wm. H. Burgess.

Published by F. Houlston & Son Wellington. Salep. March 1st 1824.

THE
Lady of the Manor.

BEING
A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS
ON THE SUBJECT OF CONFIRMATION.

Intended for the Use of the Middle and Higher Ranks
OF
YOUNG FEMALES.

BY
MRS. SHERWOOD,
Author of "LITTLE HENRY AND HIS BEARER,"
&c. &c.

VOLUME II.

SECOND EDITION.

Wellington, Salop:

PRINTED BY AND FOR F. HOULSTON AND SON.

And sold by
Harrison and Stephens, Ave-Maria Lane, London.

1825.

[*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*]



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THE

LADY OF THE MANOR,

&c.

CHAPTER VIII.

Second Conversation on the sinful Lusts of the Flesh.

IT was a fine evening in the month of May when the little assembly again collected at the manor-house. The evenings were now considerably longer than when they had first met, and they sat before the windows to take their tea and to converse, while they enjoyed the beautiful prospect, and were led by their pious instructress to magnify the Lord in his works.

When the tea-equipage was removed, and order restored, the lady of the manor commenced her instructions with a reference to the subject of their last conversation. "The sinful desires of the flesh," said the lady of the manor, "are a root of bitterness, shooting out its branches in every possible direction, and bearing fruit unto death, while its seeds are scattered unto the four winds of heaven.

"When we last met," proceeded she, "I presented you with an example, which you no doubt thought an exceedingly lovely one, of the will of a human creature effectually brought under control to that of God. I am now about to lay before you the fatal effects of indulged selfishness: and though I cannot hope that the history of Constantia will furnish you with the same entertain-

ment as that of Theodosia, yet I trust that it will, at least, afford you an useful warning.

“But, before I proceed to my story, I must make some remarks on the nature of this *love of self*. Self is the greatest enemy of mankind; that domestic tyrant through whose assistance our great spiritual foe acts on our minds, and through whom he obtains all his victories. This enemy is perpetually present with us, is our companion by day and by night, an active, restless, incessant tormenter, continually shifting its ground, and accommodating its temptations to all the various changes of life. In the unconverted soul it reigns without control; it keeps up a perpetual warfare within the breasts of the children of light; and is only conquered by the strong and constant exercise of faith. Self-love employs all those feelings of man’s nature, which were originally given him for good purposes, as the means and engines of man’s destruction; perverting every natural endowment to some evil purpose. It is ever ready to close with Satan in every attempt to ruin the soul, remaining unmortified under persecutions, afflictions, and even death itself.

“But,” continued the lady of the manor, “inasmuch as it may be more easy to make you comprehend the ill effects of selfishness by example than by a regular course of reasoning, I shall proceed immediately to the little narrative which I promised you.”

The lady then opening a small manuscript volume, read as follows.

The History of Constantia.

A certain widow lady, of the name of Honoria, resided, about forty years ago, on a moderate but well-regulated estate, which she possessed in one of the most beautiful counties of this our pleasant and fertile island. The two elder of her daughters, viz. Mrs. Jane and Mrs. Kitty, had, at the time whence I shall commence my narrative, attained a considerable age in a state of celibacy, and were, as well as their mother, persons whose manners and general deportment fitted them for the best society which their neighbourhood afforded.

The youngest of Honoria’s daughters having married and become a widow, she had returned to her mother’s

house with one little girl, who was only three years of age when her father died. Under such circumstances, it will not be questioned but that the little Constantia (for such was the name of Honoria's granddaughter) ran no small risk of being made a person of more consequence than was altogether proper; inasmuch as her education was to be directed by a widowed mother, two aunts, and a grandmother, all of whom were continually looking to this child as the sole hope of their family.

Constantia's mother had been handsome, and in consequence much flattered: she was now sunk into an indolent, worldly woman, who sought only her own indulgence. It was therefore natural that she should allow the care of her daughter to devolve almost wholly upon her mother and her more bustling sisters; the latter of whom busied themselves not a little about the child, and by endeavouring to do more than ever had been done before, brought less to pass than the most ordinary education in the most ordinary hands would have effected.

Miss Kitty, who was the most notable person of the family, and who was the chief manager of this elaborate concern, was as entirely ignorant of human nature as she was of the Arabic or Chinese language: in consequence, while she utterly overlooked all matters of importance, she multiplied without end certain little arrangements respecting the child, which, although totally insignificant in themselves, were made of such serious consequence in the family, that every servant in the house was called to account, and an universal ferment excited, if the smallest of them happened to be disregarded. And this was so much the case, that if boiled mutton chanced to be served up to the little lady's table when roasted chicken was the order of the day, Mrs. Kitty would hear no reason, but would descant on this unimportant matter with as much warmth as if her darling had met with some very serious injury. It could not, therefore, be wondered at, if many circumstances of this kind, together with the scrupulous attention which was regularly paid to her idle prattle and frequent questions, should suggest to Constantia the idea of her being a person of no ordinary importance. As she was naturally quick and sprightly, and had no little companions to

whom it might be sometimes necessary to give way, she soon acquired a pertness of manner and a stubbornness of will which began to alarm her grandmother.

The old lady was not indeed enlightened on the subject of religion, but she was a woman of sense; and although she did not rightly understand the cause of Constantia's pertness and self-confidence, she lamented its existence, and often represented to Mrs. Kitty and Mrs. Jane, the absolute necessity of putting some check upon their niece, and of steadily exacting obedience from her whenever she presumed to set up her own will in opposition to that of her elders.

The frequently repeated expostulations of the old lady, however, met with but little attention from her daughters; and thus the time wore away till Constantia had arrived at that age when it became necessary to teach her the art of reading. And now, inasmuch as there is no royal way to learning, the two aunts began to anticipate difficulties which they feared would not be surmounted without some change of system: accordingly it appeared, that every day's lesson produced a contest, which was carried on with no small degree of spirit and firmness on the part of the little girl. Sometimes, by coaxing, or address, or through the expectation of some pleasure to be enjoyed after finishing the lesson, Constantia might be persuaded to go through her daily tasks without an open rupture; but it oftener happened that, before the child could be induced to submit, a violent uproar was occasioned, sufficient to derange the whole establishment: mamma cried, the grandmother became nervous, the two aunts were thrown into the utmost disorder, and every servant in the house put into a state of agitation.

If, perchance, it was found necessary to use any kind of chastisement, the aunt who inflicted it would let the child see, that she herself received more pain on the occasion than she gave. If Constantia was to be punished by confinement in her own apartment, the old housekeeper, and sometimes both the aunts, would visit her every hour, in order to enquire into the state of her mind, endeavouring by every argument which could be devised, to persuade her to submit to her duty. All this produced no humiliating effect upon Constantia:

there was nothing in this kind of treatment tending to lower *self*, or to subdue the pride of an unregenerate heart. When the child had persevered in her obstinacy longer than usual, she would sometimes see her aunts in tears, and would be told that she had made her parents really ill. But Constantia loved herself more than any other creature; neither could she understand why her friends were to be ill on her account: for not knowing the dreadful nature and tendency of sin, she saw no reason for their being so excessively afflicted at her undutiful carriage. Therefore, unbiassed by any other motive than her own capricious fancies, she often used to carry on these fits of stubbornness for many days together; seeming to yield at last merely because it suited her so to do, without any feeling of sorrow for the trouble she had given.

These contests were continued, at intervals, for several years, and proved a dreadful hindrance to Constantia's improvement in every branch of education; fatiguing, and almost exhausting, the patience of her friends, who more than once were on the point of resolving to send her from them. But Constantia was not without that kind of art which is always more or less attendant on a selfish character. As she advanced in years, she learned at what seasons concessions might most advantageously be made; so that when she thought herself in danger of losing the affections of her friends, she would then shed tears, confess such of her faults as she thought her friends were already acquainted with, would hang upon the necks of her relations, and for a few days appear all that was amiable.

At these times she could even feign a regard for religion; and if she had occasion to write letters to any of her friends, she would express so strong and penitential a sense of her faults as appeared quite surprising for a child.

It would be hard to say that Constantia never felt any affection for her friends, nor had any sense whatever of the religion which she professed. But it is said in Scripture, *Even a child is known by its ways*; and Constantia's ways on such occasions were certainly not in unison with her profession.

As she advanced in years, her unsubdued will began

to produce increasing symptoms of an evil nature. Self from early infancy had been the chief object of Constantia's regard, and in no way was she accustomed to exercise over it the least control. This she had made appear even in the eyes of strangers; for, on finding herself at any time removed from the observation of her aunts, she was in the habit of giving unbounded licence to all her feelings, and indulging, as much as a state of childhood would permit, every sinful desire of unrenewed nature. If, for instance, she was invited out for a day to any little party among other children, she would romp and riot in a manner calculated to draw upon her the disapprobation of every one about her: in fact, she never thought of laying upon herself the least restraint. She destroyed and tore her clothes, talked at random, and was insolent to her inferiors. If by any means her grandmother or aunts were made acquainted with these improprieties, recourse was again had to the old punishments. She was catechised without end; perhaps she suffered corporeal chastisement, or was locked up in her room. But, whenever she pleased, she knew how by tears and professions to bring herself again into favour with her friends: so that the axe never being laid to the root of the evil, which was *the love of self*, those branches of outward sin which were occasionally lopped off, soon sprouted forth again with greater luxuriance.

In the mean time, as she advanced in years, her more childish faults gradually gave way to others, or rather they imperceptibly assumed a more deadly form. She now began to please herself, when left alone, with vain and sinful imaginations, forming in her own mind a succession of delusive scenes in which the idol self was gratified with every indulgence which the most unsanctified fancy could devise. Thus she perverted that fine faculty, the imagination, to the worst of purposes: while by comparing these visionary views of what she conceived to be happiness, with her actual state, she became thoroughly discontented with every thing about her, conceiving that she was cruelly injured by every little necessary restraint imposed upon her. She perceived too so great a difference between her own female relatives and the heroines of romance, that, to use a strong expression, she almost loathed the homely man-

ners of her old grandmother, her grave aunts, and her indulgent mother. Such was the extravagant turn of her thoughts; and thus, by passing from one diseased state of the mind to another, she, who was really surrounded with every earthly comfort, became one of the most discontented persons on the face of the earth.

At this time she began to lose much of the gaiety of youth, and her conscience became partially troubled: for, although dead to all spiritual concerns, her natural sense of right and wrong convinced her that she was living in sin. Religion therefore became a terror to her. Her mental improvements of every kind were now at an end, while her outward conduct and appearance were visibly influenced by the inward disorder of her mind.

We will here pause for a moment, and consider whether the state of Constantia, as I have described it, is of usual occurrence. I cannot but fear that this state is very common among such as have been reared in indolence and self-indulgence: and hence the restlessness observable in many young persons, their incapacity of enjoying the present scene, their eager desire of novelty, the weariness they express in the society of parents and near connexions—symptoms which all must have noticed who have had much to do with young people, but which can only be understood by those, who using the light which Scripture affords, are by it enabled to investigate the dark and foul recesses of the human heart. To such, however, it would perhaps be needless to say, “If you are parents, beware how you indulge that *love of self* in your offspring, which may hereafter reduce them to the condition of the miserable Constantia. It is true, you cannot change their hearts, you cannot renew their fallen nature; but you may accustom them to hear themselves spoken of as partakers of an evil nature, and as individuals of a condemned race. You may accustom them to hear, that he who takes honour to himself, is guilty of self-idolatry; and that he who seeks his own indulgence, must needs be deficient in that love to his neighbour, which is the only satisfactory evidence that can be given of our love towards God. But since no earthly effort is sufficient to subdue and mortify sin, children should be early taught where to

apply for help in time of need ; even to that Holy Spirit, who is ever willing to assist us.

But, to return to Constantia. She had attained her fourteenth year in the unhappy state which I have described ; while her friends, not understanding the errors of their own management, were almost ready to suppose that there was a certain something in her natural disposition more depraved than was common to children in general. On this subject the grandmother and aunts would converse in the bitterness of their hearts, frequently saying, with tears, "Have we not done every thing for our child which the most careful parents could do ? have we spared punishment ? have we not endeavoured to season her mind with religious principles ? have we not as much as possible preserved her from evil company ? Whence then has proceeded so extraordinary a degree of malignity and perverseness ? Do we not see numbers of children who have been utterly neglected ; who have been left with servants, with strangers, in large schools ; nay, almost in the very streets ; who in every respect are more promising than our poor Constantia ?"

But in this calculation, they did not consider that the Almighty often carries on a process of education under trials, afflictions, and adversity, by which the selfish passions of a child may be more effectually subdued, and his mind better prepared for the reception of right principles than can be effected by the best directed education, when the outward circumstances of the pupil are easy and prosperous. What then can be expected, when *self* has been set up as the idol from childhood ; and when that individual of a family, who ought to be made of the least consequence, is allowed to feel himself a person of the greatest importance ? But the minds of the poor grandmother and aunts not being well instructed on this subject, their discussions generally ended as they began, in unavailing sorrow and confusion.

While things were in this state, an uncle of Constantia's by the father's side, a man of sense and principle, came to visit his niece, whom he had not seen for many years, during which interval he had been abroad. After a few days' acquaintance, it was agreed that he should

be informed of the feelings of the elders of the family with regard to Constantia, and his advice solicited. The affair was accordingly stated to him according to their own ideas, to wit, that every thing had been done for his niece that it was possible for love or duty to dictate; but that the perverseness of her disposition had baffled all their efforts to render her in any degree what they wished.

Constantia's uncle could not deny what was asserted, although from the general result of his experience he imagined that there must have been some great error in an education which seemed to have so entirely failed. He did not doubt the good intentions of Constantia's friends, but he suspected some failure in their judgment. He requested to be allowed some hours for consideration upon the subject, before he gave his opinion: at the end of which time he gave the result of his reflections. "I have a friend," he said, "a widow-lady, a Mrs. Garston, residing near town, of whom I have the highest opinion—not merely as a good woman, but as a woman of talents and experience, both of which have been exercised particularly in the management of young ladies. She is the mother of a large well-ordered family, most of whom are married and settled well in the world. If this lady could be prevailed upon to take the charge of Constantia for a few years, I think it would be a matter of vast importance to my niece; and indeed, if this plan is not adopted, I know not what else to propose."

"What," said Mrs. Kitty, "and send her quite from us?"

"My dear," said the grandmother, "if it is for her good to leave us, you surely will not refuse to part with her from any selfish motive."

"But might not a governess in the house," added Mrs. Kitty, "answer better than an entire separation? there are many clever young persons who would be glad of such a situation."

"If Constantia," rejoined the uncle, "is what you describe her to be, I will venture to say, that no young person in the kingdom is competent to the management of her. A young teacher may assist in the matter of accomplishments," proceeded the old gentleman; "and

thus, under the eye of an elder, who is skilful in affairs of education, may be useful: but I must confess, that I much reprobate the modern custom of entrusting young people to the entire management of governesses only three or four years older than themselves. No young person has experience enough, or is sufficiently raised above the temptations attendant on youth, coolly and calmly to direct another aright who is also entering into life, though perhaps a few years behind her. However," he added, "I do not wish to dictate; I have already said more than I intended, and perhaps ought not to have meddled at all in this business." So saying, the old gentleman took up his hat and walked into the garden, leaving Honoria and her daughters to discuss the matter under consideration at their leisure.

The old lady was strongly for adopting the uncle's plan, and her daughters as much against it. However, after some warm discussions, the mother prevailed, and the uncle was requested to write to Mrs. Garston, for the purpose of soliciting her to receive Constantia. Mrs. Garston's answer soon arrived; it was addressed to the uncle, and expressed a wish to oblige him as an old friend, as well as a reluctance to decline any undertaking in which there was a probability of effecting any good. It is not necessary to repeat in this place the whole of this excellent lady's communication. Suffice it to say, that her letter was very satisfactory to the uncle, and not displeasing to the grandmother: though Mrs. Kitty at first declared it impossible, that she could part with her darling child for any length of time, and that she feared from Mrs. Garston's style of writing, that she was a person of a very violent temper. Mrs. Kitty's opposition was nevertheless soon overruled; when it was agreed that on the uncle's return to town, he should take Mrs. Kitty and Constantia with him to Mrs. Garston's, as this lady lived in a beautiful village in Hertfordshire, at a small distance from London.

I shall not expatiate upon the various feelings of the different members of the family on their taking leave of Constantia, nor upon Mrs. Kitty's thousand anxieties about the books, clothes, &c. which were to be packed up: I will only say, that the whole family were in a ferment for more than a fortnight before the journey took

place; and that every one either felt or expressed some sorrow on the occasion excepting Constantia herself, who, although she shed a few tears at parting with her grandmamma, was so full of self-importance, and so elated by the bustle excited on her account, as left her no leisure to enter into any one's feelings but her own.

At the end of the second day from their leaving home, the travellers arrived at Mrs. Garston's neat little dwelling, situated in a garden pleasantly laid out, and commanding in front the view of a fine beech wood, from the centre of which arose the Gothic tower of the village church. Mrs. and Miss Garston were drinking tea in an elegant little parlour before an open window adorned with flowers, when the visitors arrived. Mrs. Garston received the uncle as a very old friend, and welcomed Mrs. Kitty and Constantia with true Christian courtesy. Mrs. Garston was a tall woman of a dignified appearance; and although between fifty and sixty, and dressed quite like an aged woman and a widow, she had still a comely appearance, and a countenance in which good sense and sweetness were blended together in no common degree. Miss Garston was just such a young woman as every Christian mother would wish her daughter to resemble; this sweet young lady uniting an expression of strong sense with great feminine delicacy, and combining uncommon sprightliness of manner with extreme gentleness of spirit.

During the evening, the uncle being present, every thing passed off well, and Mrs. Kitty could not help confessing to herself, that Mrs. Garston entirely answered the description given of her.

Next morning, after breakfast, the old gentleman proposed a walk to the young ladies, leaving Mrs. Kitty with Mrs. Garston.

Mrs. Kitty availed herself of this opportunity to recommend Constantia to the tender love of Mrs. Garston, and to solicit certain little indulgences for her which she feared would not be easily obtained.

Mrs. Garston listened to her with politeness, and with a sincere wish to accommodate all unimportant matters to her desire. But when she proceeded to require such indulgences as Mrs. Garston thought might be injurious to Constantia, she answered, that she hoped entire con-

fidence would be placed in her, and that she might be permitted to regulate the young lady, as occasions should arise, according to the best of her judgment. "I have," said Mrs. Garston, "brought up four of my own daughters, and as many more young women not related to me; and with each individual of these (though aiming always, I trust, at the same end, that is, to acquaint them with God) I have found it necessary to adopt different modes of treatment, and even with the same individual, to alter my treatment, perhaps many times, during the course of her education.

"That our nature is utterly depraved," continued Mrs. Garston, "is a point which, of course, no Christian will dispute: but, independent of this general depravity, it is certain, that every individual of the human race has some strong besetting sin, which requires a peculiar mode of treatment; and these besetments are continually varying or taking some new form, which, when perceived by a watchful tutor, should lead him to vary his plans with his pupil.

"Being fully aware of this, I can give you the general assurance, my dear Madam, that I will do my best for your niece, and treat her with as much tenderness as possible: but I cannot consent to bind myself to the observance of particular rules, which hereafter might possibly tend to hamper and perplex me. You desire me to allow Miss Constantia a room to herself, and also to permit her to be alone for some hours every day. Now whether such indulgences are likely to be useful or injurious to her, depends so entirely on the state of her mind, that I dare not promise you to allow them until I have had opportunity of studying her character.

"Solitude, my dear Madam, is a good or an evil thing as it is employed: to minds in a certain state, I consider it as the worst of poisons; and, generally speaking, I do not think much of it good for young people."

Mrs. Kitty looked with amazement at Mrs. Garston, as though she had expressed some very extraordinary sentiment; upon which Mrs. Garston added, "If you make any observations on the common employments of young women when left alone, you will not be led to conclude that those employments are the result of any proper internal feeling. Take any individual," continued Mrs.

Garston, "from the common mass of young women, and confine her to her room for a whole morning, I ask you, generally speaking, how will she employ herself? probably in looking over her clothes, curling her hair, new modelling her dresses, or if a novel be at hand, in studying its contents. Solitude to a young person whose mind is in this kind of desultory state, is, I repeat it, nothing better than poison, and should certainly be avoided until there is reason to think that some very decided change has taken place."

Mrs. Kitty not knowing what to make of all this, answered with some degree of displeasure in her manner, "I suppose then it is not your intention at present to give Constantia a room to herself?"

"I think not," said Mrs. Garston, "until I have reason to think it would be beneficial to her."

"Of course then," said Mrs. Kitty, "you intend to make her the companion of your own daughter?"

"My dear Madam," replied Mrs. Garston, "perhaps you may think me whimsical and particular, if I tell you that I have no thought of the kind. I myself sleep in a large airy room, and shall take Miss Constantia to be my own companion."

"Would not a younger companion be better for her?" said Mrs. Kitty, somewhat disconcerted at the idea of Constantia being continually with her instructress, and consequently deprived of all kind of liberty.

Mrs. Garston seemed to hesitate a moment in replying to this remark, feeling, as she did, that she was conversing with a person who had very few ideas in common with herself. Her natural sincerity and openness soon however prevailing over this feeling, she answered, "My dear Madam, it is certainly intended by Providence, that young people should associate together; and therefore, in the common course of families, we see two, three, or more sisters growing up together under the regulation of one parent, and, if that parent is a good one, brought up in a sweet, a pure, a holy friendship. But to propose the indiscriminate mixture of young people out of different families, under the general idea that young persons should have companions of their own age, I consider as one of the most fatal and mischievous plans that can possibly be adopted. I wish Constantia to

love my daughter, and to be with her constantly, in my presence, or under the eye of any other careful elderly person.

“But, not to say any thing of your niece, high as my opinion of my daughter is, (for she has ever been a lovely and beloved child, dutiful and affectionate to me in an uncommon degree,) I do not consider that she has experience or perhaps steadiness of conduct enough to form another young mind. The hours of greatest danger to young people are those of retirement, when they open their hearts to each other, and betray all the weaknesses and follies of their nature, strengthening by indiscreet communications every evil inclination, and perpetuating every foolish thought. Were my daughter twenty-eight instead of eighteen, I might perhaps deliberate on a subject, on which I have now no hesitation in saying that my mind is entirely made up.”

Poor Mrs. Kitty was obliged to submit, knowing that she had not power either to dispute with Mrs. Garston, or persuade her mother to remove Constantia. She therefore gave up this affair, and proceeded to the discussion of certain other lesser matters, in which she found Mrs. Garston more complying. For this excellent lady, as I before observed, was willing to please Constantia's friends in every point which did not affect the real good of the young person herself.

During this conversation, however, it was not difficult for Mrs. Garston to discover what had been the leading error in Constantia's education; namely, that she had been made of too much consequence in her own eyes, whereby that *self-love* which is inherent in our fallen race, had been so fostered as to produce all its natural fruits.

We will pass over the few following days which Mrs. Kitty and Constantia's uncle spent with Mrs. Garston, and proceed to the period when Constantia was left alone with her new friends.

Constantia had slept with her aunt since their arrival, and had flattered herself that she should be allowed the use of the same apartment after her departure: when, therefore, she heard that her trunks were to be removed to Mrs. Garston's room, where a small bed was prepared for her, she betrayed a feeling of dissatisfaction, which

Mrs. Garston made a point of passing by without notice. However, after this little discomfiture, the evening passed off smoothly, Constantia appearing good-humoured, and willing to please: for she had a great deal of that kind of civility which those persons who are in fact the least inclined to make sacrifices to others not unfrequently employ in order to serve themselves—a kind of compliance which often passes for real good-nature and self-denial with those who do not look deep into character; and which often leads persons to hope for acts of disinterested friendship from those who have not the least inclination to lay themselves out for the good of others.

In judging whether a character is such a one whose self-denial may be confided in, we must not form our estimate by mere acts of politeness or courtesy among equals, or even by single and solitary instances of charity and kindness to inferiors; but we must look for long courses of action in doing good, through evil report and good report, without recompence or reward.

But to return to my story. Mrs. Garston, who was attentively studying the character of Constantia, was not deceived or thrown out of the opinion which she had formed by the apparent sweetness of her manner this evening. She imagined her character to be a selfish one, and knew that, if she was to be the means, under God, of doing her any good, she must discover her besetting sin, and strike at the root of that sin. She did not attempt, during the first day, to examine into Constantia's acquirements, but allowed the time to pass as quietly as possible; she and her daughter being engaged in their usual employments, while Constantia occupied herself in that same desultory manner to which she had been accustomed at home.

The next day was Sunday. Mrs. Garston and her family, of course, attended divine service, when they had opportunity of hearing a truly excellent sermon. They spent the afternoon in visiting some poor sick persons, with whom Mrs. Garston conversed on religious subjects; and in the evening, after tea, the family met to read and pray. When the servants, who had assembled in the parlour for this purpose, were dismissed, Mrs. Garston began to speak with her daughter upon the

subject of the sermon; and Constantia took this occasion, by the remarks which she made, to let Mrs. Garston see that, as far as head-knowledge went, she was not an entire novice in religious matters. Her remarks were acute, and such as would have led a person whose insight into character was less deep than Mrs. Garston's, to set her down (considering her age and the company she had kept) as one possessing more knowledge than might have been expected. But Mrs. Garston formed no agreeable conclusion from this circumstance. She had seen much of young people brought up in situations in which they had enjoyed opportunities of hearing religious matters discussed, and she had been taught, by experience, that it was a common and fatal error among such, to suppose that they were advanced Christians, because they could talk, and perhaps write, fluently on the subject of religion; when, in fact, they had not taken a single step in the way to Zion. Mrs. Garston also knew, that in polished society, where every facility is given to the acquirement of knowledge, and where teachers are required to produce fruit, as it were, in seed-time, not waiting for the due time of harvest, there is much danger, not only in religious affairs, but in things of less consequence, of forcing young minds prematurely, and thereby leading them to form a wrong conception of their own acquisitions.

The mind of Mrs. Garston had long been employed on the subject of the religious education of young people, and she considered it as the duty of the spiritual teacher to endeavour to bring the principles of his pupils to the test, by requiring from them that species of conduct which was most consistent with their professions, and by not suffering them to rest under the calm and untried assurance that they were in the right way, or had acquired any Christian graces, of which they had no further evidence, perhaps, than that of talking fluently respecting them.

In pursuance of this her general system, she determined to bring Constantia's religion, as soon as possible, to the proof; and in order without difficulty to introduce the subject she wished to converse upon, she requested her daughter to bring Gilpin's edition of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, observing that it was a book she

much loved, and which she wished to go through again with her young people on a Sunday evening.

The book was produced and begun; and Constantia, availing herself of a pause in the reading, took the opportunity of letting Mrs. Garston know that she had often read it, and could give an account of every part of it.

"I am glad to hear," said Mrs. Garston, "that your studies have been so well directed, Miss Constantia, and as you know the value of the book, you will have additional pleasure in hearing it again: but probably you have never read it with a view in reference to which I have now selected it. *The Pilgrim's Progress* must not be considered as a mere allegory or pleasing story, but as a mirror, in which every Christian, or every one desiring to be a Christian, may see his own case. When I read this book, I often stop to consider, Where in the course of this Christian progress am I? Is my situation a safe one? have I escaped such and such snares? have I reached such and such stages in my way to the Celestial City? have I ever been in the right way? or am I at this time a wanderer from it? I would now have you, my dear young friend," continued Mrs. Garston, "after reading this book, to ask yourself this question—In what part of the Pilgrim's course do I find myself at this day?"

"I am afraid, not in a very good place," answered Constantia, half laughing.

Mrs. Garston and her daughter looked seriously, but their gravity had no power to check the rising levity of Constantia: for this young creature was at this time precisely in that state of mind, which rendered it of very little consequence to her whether she were considered as an object of praise or blame, so as she might but be brought forward into notice. For excessive vanity is above all minor considerations, and is capable of deriving nourishment from every thing except that kind of neglect which is evidently unstudied.

But to return to Constantia, who, unawed by the grave looks of her companions, continued to smile and repeat her remark—"I am afraid I am not in a good place, at least, not a very good one:" adding, "What do you think of the Town of Vanity, Miss Garston; do you think that situation will suit me?"

"I certainly think," replied Mrs. Garston, "that you have not made your escape from that place of trial, Miss Constantia, or you would not speak with so much levity on such important subjects. But I have no reason to suppose that you have entered it as a pilgrim and stranger upon earth, or that you feel and loath its vanities, with a real desire to be set free from them: this I cannot as yet think. There is much, very much, for the Christian to pass through before he arrives at this state. Remember that the City of Destruction is the birth-place and dwelling-place of every child of Adam, and that conviction of sin is the first evidence which the sinner gives of his conversion. For this therefore we must examine ourselves, and seriously enquire—Have we as yet felt the burden of our sins? and is it *a sore burden, too heavy for us to bear?*" (Psalm lxxxviii. 4.)

Constantia looked a little confused; but, recovering immediately, she said, "I know that I am a sinner."

"You know that you must confess yourself to be a sinner," replied Mrs. Garston, "and you have been taught to do so, as it were, by rote: but the difference is very great between a mere languid assent to any doctrine, and a strong sense or feeling of it. For instance: I now see a man walking on the other side of the garden rails. My reason tells me, and my knowledge of the state of mankind on earth leads me at once to believe, without doubt or hesitation, that that man is a sinner. But this bare assurance, although strong enough not to admit of being controverted, excites in me no feelings of horror at the state of that individual. I do not shudder at his sinfulness; I do not loath his depravity; nor is any particular anxiety excited in me to procure him relief."

"No," said Constantia, "because you know nothing more of him but that, as he is a man, he must be a sinner."

"Well, but," said Mrs. Garston, "suppose any one should tell me, in general terms, that the man was a bad father, a bad husband, a thief, a liar, a man, in short, who lived in the open breach of all God's commandments: what then would my feelings towards him be? Would they be the same as they now are?"

"No," said Constantia, "assuredly not: you would

feel what you now do not—you would look at him with dread and dislike.”

“Well,” said Mrs. Garston, “we will further add, Suppose my informer were to enter into the particulars of this man’s character as far as the human eye can see it, explaining to me how he used his wife, how he injured his children, how he indulged himself, what gross language he used, with other minute and hateful particulars of his conduct; how would my feelings towards him then be excited?”

“Of course,” replied Constantia, “your disgust and horror would be greatly increased; the very name of the man would become odious to you.”

“We will now go one step further,” said Mrs. Garston. “Suppose it were possible that all the secret motions of sin, the horrible and unclean thoughts and propensities of this sinner’s heart, without cloak or disguise, could be laid open and spread before me; what effect would all this produce upon my feelings?”

“O,” said Constantia, “why you would hate and loath the man more than a serpent.”

“Do you not now perceive,” replied Mrs. Garston, “that, between a bare assent to the general idea that such a one is a sinner and a particular acquaintance with his corruptions, there is a prodigious difference? The one excites no distinct feeling; it is a mere assent to a general proposition: the other produces a strong and lively emotion, which, if not tempered by Christian charity, would lead one to wish that society could be freed from the pestilential presence of such a being. But mingling with these feelings of disgust that Christian charity which cannot but desire that no soul should be lost; what sort of emotions would then be excited towards the man?”

“Why,” replied Constantia, “Christian charity would, of course, lead you to do what you could for the reformation of the man.”

“If the man,” replied Mrs. Garston, “were not only unconnected with me, but an absolute stranger to me, I should perhaps be satisfied with a feeble effort to do something for him: I might use such means for his help as immediately presented themselves, such as sending him a book, speaking in his behalf to the minister of the

parish, &c. &c. : and if I did not succeed in my endeavours, I should probably sit down contented, and think no more about him. For such is the narrowness of the most enlarged human mind, and so bounded are our powers, that the best of us is disposed to make but very slight exertions in such cases. But suppose I were to discover that this man—this great sinner—was a beloved brother or son, reared in my arms, and dear to my heart as my own flesh and blood ; what then would be my feelings and my conduct ?”

“Why,” said Constantia, “you would pray for him, shed tears for him, talk to him, read to him, entreat others to do the same, and spend your money for him ; in short, you would leave nothing undone to bring him into the right way.”

“And now,” said Mrs. Garston, “let us go one step further, and I have done. Were you brought to the conviction that this great sinner was not a brother, a husband, or a son, but your own self, and that you yourself were in the road to everlasting destruction ; what would your feelings then be ? Very different, I imagine, Constantia, to what they were when, with a countenance totally unmoved, you just now asserted that you knew yourself to be a sinner.”

Constantia made no answer, and Mrs. Garston added, “If you have not yet felt conviction of sin, you cannot have seen the need of a Saviour : we may therefore venture to say, that although you may be enabled to speak something on religious subjects, from having frequently heard such matters discussed ; it is nevertheless very certain that you have not even begun your Christian course. Therefore let me entreat you, my beloved child, not to deceive yourself, and never to speak further on these important points than your experience will enable you to do.”

Here Mrs. Garston broke off the conversation, and Constantia sat awhile meditating on what she had heard, which the old lady was not displeased to observe.

The next morning after breakfast, Miss Garston being set down to her usual employments, Mrs. Garston called for Constantia’s books, and examined her with respect to her acquirements. She found that her mind was far from being uncultivated, since indeed it was not easy

for the giddiest and most selfish of young persons to live many years with such a woman as Honoria, without acquiring some refined and elegant ideas, unless in case of such natural incapacity, as could by no means be imputed to Constantia.

Mrs. Garston, notwithstanding, perceived that Constantia had no habits of application, and that there was a degree of carelessness and absence about her which could proceed only from a mind in great disorder. Having, however, measured the powers and abilities of Constantia, as far as she could in so short a time, and having made every allowance for bad habits long indulged, Mrs. Garston set her young pupil certain tasks which she informed her were to be punctually executed before the next day's dinner-hour. Mrs. Garston then occupied herself with the affairs of her family for some hours. After which, they all walked out together till dinner-time; making, as usual, their hours of exercise profitable to some poor family. The evening was, according to custom, spent in reading, music, and needlework. Thus passed the day; during which, Miss Garston more than once privately reminded Constantia of her allotted tasks: advising her to employ a due portion of her time in accomplishing them, and assuring her that her mother would certainly require them to be perfected.

Constantia however took no notice of these hints: for, to say the truth, she had from the first determined not to perform her appointed tasks, being resolved not to be treated by Mrs. Garston as an uneducated child. All this time however, even after she had formed this determination, her whole manner was cheerful and obliging in the extreme. For Constantia, in common with many other obstinate young people, whenever she had a particular point to carry upon which she had set her mind, was always remarkably obliging on every other occasion; very full of professions; very attentive, and very agreeable: by which means she had often succeeded in obtaining a victory over her aunts, which even with them she would certainly have failed to do, had she allowed her general carriage at those times to appear offensive.

Thus the evening and morning hours passed smoothly away, till breakfast was prepared: and during this repast Constantia took occasion to mention the Sunday

evening's conversation in a manner which might have led any one, judging of young people by words rather than by actions, to suppose that it had made a most salutary impression upon her mind. But breakfast being finished, and Miss Garston settled busily to her studies, the time of trial came on. Mrs. Garston called for Constantia's books. But on their being produced, it was found that the young lady had not done one single thing required of her. Mrs. Garston did not put herself into any agitation, but said, "Constantia, I am now going to settle some of my family concerns, and shall hear you again before dinner-time; when I hope you will have finished what I require, otherwise you will have no dinner."

Constantia looked insolently at Mrs. Garston, but said nothing, and the old lady left the room. As soon as she was gone, Constantia carried her books to the sofa at the other end of the room, and taking some trifles out of her pocket, began to amuse herself with them.

After a while, Miss Garston, looking up from her employments and seeing what the young lady was about, very kindly entreated her to perform her tasks, assuring her that her mother would be obeyed.

Constantia took no notice of what Miss Garston said about the tasks, but with affected carelessness and good-humour replied, "Dear Miss Garston, I have been thinking of the poor people we were calling upon yesterday, and wish you would let me help you to work for them this evening. You remarked that the old woman in the thatched cottage wanted a warm petticoat against winter: I have been reckoning my money, and think I should like to buy her one. How much would it come to?"

"We will talk of this in the evening, my dear Constantia," said Miss Garston; "the present time you must devote to your tasks." Miss Garston now again returned to her own employments, and Constantia remained silent a few minutes. At length she said, "How I should like to sleep with you! I think you would teach me so many good things. I don't like to talk to your mamma at night; I am afraid of disturbing her; but I should not have that fear with you; and I could love you so dearly, my sweet Miss Garston, so very

dearly! Only you are so much better than I am, that I am almost afraid you must despise me."

"We ought not to allow ourselves to desire any thing which my mother judges to be improper for us, Constantia," returned Miss Garston seriously, yet secretly without any regret at not being so intimately associated with Constantia as that young lady seemed to wish.

It happened to be a rainy day, therefore there was no walk proposed; so that Constantia had the whole morning for the execution of her tasks. But, as I before said, she was determined not to execute them. When the servant came in to lay the cloth for dinner, Mrs. Garston tried Constantia again; but discovering what was the true state of the case, and Constantia not being able or not choosing to repeat one word of her tasks, she calmly desired her to return to her books; expressing a hope that the tasks would be finished before tea.

Dinner was now brought in, to which Mrs. Garston and her daughter sat down together: after which they engaged themselves in their usual occupations. Music now employed an hour or more, the mother and daughter playing together; after which a large basket was brought down containing articles to be cut out for the poor, about which they both busied themselves in contriving things for the best. In this employment, Miss Garston displayed all that vivacity natural to young people, and which is exceedingly lovely when rightly directed. Thus the time passed till tea was ready; when a pious lady of the neighbourhood arriving in cloak and pattens, she was requested to take tea with them, and assist in executing some of the work. In the mean time Constantia remained totally unregarded, till Miss Garston sat down to make tea; when Mrs. Garston going up to the end of the room where the young lady still sat, once more made trial of her competency. But Constantia, who supposed that Mrs. Garston would hardly think of persevering in her plan of punishment before a stranger, was more than ever determined to carry her point; although she was very hungry, and longed much for a slice of the nice loaf which was just set upon the table. She expected that Mrs. Garston would have said to her, "You shall have your tea now, Constantia, and try again afterwards." No offer of the

kind however being made, and Mrs. Garston going back calmly to the table, she could support her apparent equanimity no longer, but burst into tears. The party notwithstanding were immediately so engaged with their tea and their needle-work, that no one seemed to notice her. At length the tea-things being removed, Constantia began to think, as no one regarded her, it might be as well for her to give up a plan of resistance which only brought trouble upon herself, without appearing in the least to disturb the tranquillity of any other person. She therefore applied herself closely to her tasks; and having accomplished them in less than an hour, she brought them up to Mrs. Garston, who listened to her repetitions without any comment, and then calmly pointing out what she expected should be prepared for the next day, she went on with her work and conversation.

Constantia had expected that as soon as these formidable tasks were completed, such a scene would follow as might amply compensate her previous sufferings. She expected to be embraced, caressed, and congratulated; and that every servant in the house would be put in motion to provide her some refreshments. But none of these consequences ensued: no bell was rung, no servant called, nor the least emotion or bustle excited. Constantia sat awhile very impatiently: at length she said in a whisper, "May I not have something to eat?"

"The servants are now sitting down to their evening work," replied Mrs. Garston; "they cannot be disturbed; you must wait till supper-time."

Constantia looked mortified, and shed tears: but as no one seemed to notice her, she was obliged to bear her hunger till supper-time; privately resolving that she would not again expose herself to the like mortification. Nor did she ever from that time openly set her will in opposition to that of Mrs. Garston: for though she frequently, and for short intervals, shewed a rebellious disposition; yet it was evident that her resistance to the authority of Mrs. Garston became weaker, and her fits of obstinacy shorter and less determined. She soon lost in a great measure her carelessness and abstractedness, and seemed better able to command her attention to what she was about. In consequence of which her improvement in every branch of learning became pro-

portionably rapid: in addition to this, she began to take an interest in what passed about her, which gave her a much more amiable and intelligent appearance than formerly.

Mrs. Garston endeavoured to draw her more and more out of herself by supplying her with constant employment, leaving her seldom alone, and frequently rousing her to mental exertion by some interesting question, whenever she appeared to be sinking into her old habits of self-indulgence in thought, the symptoms of which this penetrating woman could instantly distinguish.

Thus Constantia's habits were daily improving, though Mrs. Garston had not as yet any reason to suppose that a radical or vital change of heart had taken place in her. She knew, however, that this was a work quite above her power, and that she must humbly wait the operation of the Holy Spirit to bring it about.

Constantia had been eight months or more with Mrs. Garston, when a petition arrived, requesting that she might be permitted to spend the Midsummer holidays at home with her grandmother, the younger ladies being about to make an excursion for some months to the sea.

In answer to this request, Mrs. Garston proposed that, instead of Constantia's going home, the old lady should come and spend the summer months with her granddaughter in Berkshire. And in order to tempt her to undertake this journey, (which it was well understood would be deemed by her a very perilous concern,) Mrs. Garston assured her that she should have a convenient chamber, adjoining to a small drawing-room, of which she was to have the sole command; and that she should only join the family when she felt herself disposed so to do. She also described their quiet way of living; her neat garden abounding with a variety of fragrant flowers; the contiguous beech woods; and the Gothic tower of the church—all of which were to be seen from the room of which she requested her to take possession. And as Honoria had been used to a carriage, Mrs. Garston promised to provide her with a garden-chair, for the purpose of conveying her to the church, and taking her occasionally to visit the many neat cottages in the neighbourhood. She likewise informed her, that she

should have accommodation for the old servant who always attended her.

When the old lady received this invitation, she expressed great pleasure, and, to the surprise of her daughters, declared her intention of accepting it.

Mrs. Garston's little circle was filled with joy, when they heard that Honoria was preparing for the journey. Constantia shewed more warmth of feeling on this occasion than she had ever testified in her life before: and when Mrs. Garston told her that she should trust to her to prepare all things for her grandmamma in the same way she was accustomed to have them at home, she really exerted herself on the occasion, and, in the effort, seemed wholly to have forgotten *self*.

As soon as the month of May was over, and the country fully dressed in its summer-garments, the old lady sent to give notice of her speedy arrival. Constantia was busy for several days in her preparations, which she finished by removing into the window of the little drawing-room some beautiful geraniums in flower, and placing a large Bible upon the table.

In the afternoon of the appointed day, the old lady arrived, having slept two nights on the road. She seemed much affected at the sight of her granddaughter, much grown, greatly improved, and exhibiting every expression of affectionate regard. She was delighted with Mrs. Garston and her daughter, her neat house, its pretty situation, the beech wood, the Gothic tower, together with the preparations made for her comfort. Neither was Mrs. Garston less pleased with Honoria than the old lady was with her and with all about her. She however soon perceived that her respectable visitant wanted those clear, simple, and cheerful views of religion, which minister so greatly to the soul's repose; and as it was very apparent that the old lady's term of existence in this world would probably not be very long, she determined, with God's help, to avail herself of the occasion now offered to set before her brighter and clearer views of the scriptural scheme of man's salvation. And as an assistant to her in this charitable work, she requested the pious rector of the parish frequently to visit her family during the time of the old lady's residence in it: and in this good man, she found a power-

ful auxiliary, while his frequent appearance at their tea-table added much to the interest of their little society.

The old lady being soon established in her new apartments, found herself extremely happy; and at Mrs. Garston's earnest request she consented to be her inmate during all the summer months.

And now Constantia really began to appear in an amiable point of view. Her attentions to her grandmother were not only singularly pleasing in themselves, but extremely soothing to the old lady, whose gratitude to Mrs. Garston for this improvement in her beloved grandchild was without bounds. Honoria took many an airing in her garden-chair, accompanied by Mrs. Garston, her daughter, and Constantia, who walked by her side. She found a sacred pleasure in the daily perusal of her Bible, and hearkened with increasing interest to the religious conversation which passed in the family; till, by the blessing of God, her mind became settled with regard to many important points in which she had hitherto been wavering and uncertain. She began also at the same time to contemplate her past life in a new point of view; perceiving how sinfully she had been conformed to the world, and lamenting the many grievous offences into which she had fallen, even without suspecting that she had done amiss. Her heart now became so tender, that she was continually employed, when alone, in lamenting her sins: and yet, with this strong sense of sin, she felt, through the divine mercy, such a persuasion of the love and power of her Saviour, as to enjoy not only a great degree of peace, but even a perfect assurance that she should be finally happy through the merits of her adorable Lord.

In this manner all the summer with the beginning of autumn passed away in the family of Mrs. Garston. At length, Honoria was reminded, by the increasing shortness of the days, that the season approached in which she was always fearful of travelling: and this compelled her reluctantly to decide upon her return home.

On the morning previous to that fixed for her departure, she first called her beloved granddaughter to her bedside, and afterwards had a long conversation with Mrs. Garston. She conversed with Constantia upon the most important subjects which can engage the thoughts

of a human creature—the necessity of using this transient life aright, in order to our happiness in the eternal world; the grand scheme of man's salvation; the love of the Father; the propitiatory sacrifice of the Son; the influences of the Holy Spirit; the depravity of the heart; and the vanity of the world—subjects on which she had been lately led to meditate with the deepest interest.

On this solemn occasion, the venerable lady did not spare herself, but frankly acknowledged to her granddaughter the errors of her past life, particularly as to the want of Christian simplicity in the management of her beloved Constantia in infancy and childhood; pointing out what she herself had but lately been enabled to discern, namely, the innumerable occasions on which pride and a sense of family consequence had led her to injure her darling child, by making her of too much importance in her own eyes as well as in those of her servants and dependents.

Honorina proceeded with her discourse by expressing her high approbation of Mrs. Garston's mode of life and daily conversation; adding, that it was her peculiar wish that Constantia should remain in her present situation at least till she had entered her nineteenth year, at which time she hoped that, with the divine blessing, her character would have attained to some degree of stability. After adding much more of a similar nature, she concluded her discourse with these words: "If I live, I shall have no difficulty in carrying this point; and if I die, I hope, my Constantia, that you will remember this my earnest request, and throw no difficulties in the way of its accomplishment."

Constantia did not fail, with many tears, to assure her dear grandmamma, that all she wished should be done: at the same time expressing her fondest hope, that her venerable parent might live, not only to see her enter her nineteenth year, but many succeeding ones; and that the next summer especially might be spent as sweetly, in the same scenes, and with the same dear friends, as the last few months had been.

Honorina's conversation with Mrs. Garston was not less tender and affecting than that with Constantia. The old lady thanked her in the most solemn manner for the unexpected blessings which she had been the

means of conveying to her and her granddaughter, and took this occasion to express a strong desire that Constantia should remain with her till she had attained her nineteenth year; entreating Mrs. Garston, that, in case of her death, she would not be discouraged from keeping her with her by any little difficulties which might be raised by other parts of the family.

Mrs. Garston gave her every assurance which she required, and expressed her hope that the return of the next summer might bring with it a renewal of the happiness they had lately enjoyed in each other's society.

The poor old lady was melted into tears, on hearing these expressions of affection, and pressing Mrs. Garston's hand, she replied, "These matters are in the hand of God, my dear Madam; and I desire in all things to shew a due submission to the divine will. I cannot describe to you how happy I have been in this place, nor what an inestimable privilege I account it to have been thus brought into simple Christian society before that awful change takes place, which my advanced age leads me daily to look for."

The next morning, Honoria took her leave of the weeping family, and every thing returned into its usual routine in Mrs. Garston's house.

During the winter many pious and affectionate letters were received from Honoria: but in the spring, when Mrs. Garston was beginning to look forward to the appearance of her summer visitor, and Constantia was watching the growth of certain flowers, with a hope that they might adorn her grandmamma's reoccupied apartment—a letter arrived, reporting the sudden death of that respectable lady. Honoria's departure was easy, her mind being preserved in a calm and resigned state, full of humble acquiescence and cheerful hope, which sweetly tempered the anguish of her body. She had made the same request to her daughters as she had done to Constantia and Mrs. Garston: but not having required an actual promise from them that they would not remove Constantia from her present situation till she had attained her nineteenth year, it did not appear that they thought themselves bound to submit to this request, but rather judged themselves at liberty to act as occasion might dictate.

Many letters passed between Constantia and her elder aunt in the course of the summer. But as there was much family business to arrange during these months, no hint was given of a wish to see her before the Christmas holidays, at which time a trusty servant was sent to conduct her home.

On this occasion, Mrs. Garston, her daughter, and Constantia, separated with many tears; while Constantia expressed a hope that she should return after a few weeks. Mrs. Garston reminded Constantia of her grandmother's last request; to which she answered, that she wanted not such a motive to make her wish a return to Mrs. Garston's house. "My heart is with you," said Constantia: "I have been happier with you than I ever was in any other place, and I shall not be happy till I meet you again."

Constantia felt what she said at the time, and Mrs. Garston saw no reason to doubt of her present sincerity. But she feared that no great stability was to be expected from this young person, when she should be again placed in a situation where *self* would be indulged, and advantage again given to the deceitful lusts of the flesh. She was therefore prepared for whatever might happen, and accordingly saw her young pupil depart not without feeling a considerable depression of spirits. She retained, however, a comfortable assurance that her faithful labours for Constantia's good would not be absolutely lost; and under this view she quietly resigned her charge into the hands of God.

Thus Constantia returned home, and was joyfully received by her mother and aunts, who had accumulated for her an infinity of indulgences, which were not allowed her, nor indeed ever thought of by her, while living with Mrs. Garston.

And here let me stop to point out the evil of inspiring young people with the love of needless and every way useless possessions. How many children do we see laden with books before they can read!—with crayons and pencils before they have an idea of drawing!—not to mention toys and trinkets without end! Thus do parents and injudicious friends administer to the lusts of the eye and the pride of life, exciting an endless train of wants which never can be satisfied.

But to return to Constantia. The indulgences prepared for her within the limits of her own family were the smallest of the dangers which beset her on her arrival at home. During her residence with Mrs. Garston, a very important change had taken place in the neighbourhood, which I shall now proceed to mention.

Adjoining to the estate which was now, by the death of their mother, become the property of Mrs. Kitty and her sisters, lay the extensive domain of a certain noble marquis, whom we will call Lord T——. In the centre of this estate stood a superb mansion, encircled with groves of venerable oak, and possessing every character of old magnificence. The history of Lord T—— was, that in early life he had dipped so deeply into his property, as obliged him to leave the country and reside many years abroad; where, by adopting a plan of great comparative economy, he so far retrieved his affairs, as had enabled him to return to England during the course of the last year.

His long residence in a foreign country had not, however, failed to produce upon him its usual ill effects. Being much separated from persons of his own rank, he had not only acquired a love of low company, but had been drawn in to marry a gay dashing Irish widow, whom he accidentally met with at an assembly in Paris. This lady had made him the father of six children, viz. three sons, and as many daughters, all of whom were older than Constantia. Of the manners and conduct of these young lords and ladies I shall say nothing, leaving them to speak for themselves, which they will have much opportunity of doing during the course of my narrative. I must however premise, that as these young people had been educated by foreign tutors and governesses selected with little care, we must not consider them as fair specimens of persons of their own rank in general.

During the absence of Lord T——, the family-mansion had remained untenanted, the houses of servants and dependents unset, the family-pew at church unoccupied, and the whole parish comparatively deserted, excepting by the family of Honoria and a few poor people. A very different state of things, however, succeeded immediately upon the return of this noble family, which happened a short time previous to the death of Honoria.

Bustle and confusion now took place throughout the whole parish: every house now found a tenant, and every workman and artificer found employment in pulling down old things and replacing them with new ones. The marchioness having been much in Paris, thought herself in consequence a person of taste: and as her husband did not consider himself in circumstances sufficiently affluent to keep up a house in town, she was glad to indulge her love of pleasure by promoting such second-rate public amusements as a country society could supply. She accordingly attended and gave a brilliancy to all the assemblies, the race and assize balls held in the neighbouring county town; she gave dances at her own house, and devised a variety of rural amusements in the park and on the lawn, still hoping to produce something which might remind her of the ever varying glories of Beaujeu and Frescati.

The marchioness had been accustomed, during the last thirty years of her life, to exist only in public; and, to do her justice, she possessed precisely that state of spirits, and that measure of understanding, which fitted her to appear well in such scenes. Though now more than fifty years of age, with the help of pearl powder, rouge, and an auburn wig, she passed well in full-dress and by candle-light. She moved gracefully, had much of that kind of wit which consists in having an answer ready on all occasions, and suited to all purposes, except serious ones: and, to sum up all, she was what some people would call a charming woman; that is, though a marchioness, she thought it worth her while, when she had collected a certain number of people together for her own amusement, not to insult them with disdain and coldness.

Not so her three daughters; who, without having any more valuable qualities than their mother, had much of that cold, supercilious manner which is now so common among young ladies who think themselves of consequence, with which they contrive to cheat youth of all its smiles and dimples, and to anticipate the rigid appearance of old age without its intelligence. In one word, the three daughters of Lord T—— were never seen to smile, unless conversing with each other, with their brothers, or with some other young persons of sufficient

rank to be admitted into their *coterie*; on which occasions they would laugh violently, as if incapable of restraining themselves. At all other times, they preserved an invincible gravity: and though they never absented themselves from their mother's parties, they never condescended to be pleased or displeased by any thing they saw or heard in them; but wore the appearance of persons who were either greatly fatigued, or totally abstracted from the present scene.

Of the sons, the eldest, Lord L——, though cold and haughty, was commonly polite; and as he was extremely handsome, he was not altogether an unpopular character. The education of this young man, who was the eldest of the family, was supposed to be finished; and, in consequence, he was residing at home with his father.

But the second son, Lord Robert, who was intended for the Church, (a very valuable living, likely soon to be vacant, being in the gift of his father,) was still belonging to the University, into which he had been admitted some time before the rest of the family had returned to England. This second son was less of the gentleman than his brother, a sportsman, and affecting to despise the profession into which he was about to enter.

The third son, Lord William, was an insipid youth, who, having little intellect, was a servile imitator of his more sprightly brother Robert; and, in consequence, when he repeated his brother's profane jest, seemed even to want the poor excuse which Robert might plead with some show of truth, that he was led to do wrong by the overflowing excess of his spirits.

Upon the whole, in this family, the old marquis himself might be selected as the best of the set; though the long habits of anxiety about money-matters, induced by former negligences and indiscretions, had undoubtedly in some degree lowered that high sense of honour respecting these matters, which might have been expected from a man of his birth and appearance.

I have now, I trust, my gentle reader, made you fully acquainted with the new society into which I am about to introduce Constantia; so without further loss of time I shall proceed with my story.

It might reasonably be supposed, that persons who had always lived in elegant retirement, like the daugh-

ters of Honoria, and paid much attention to the usual forms and decencies of life, would have shrunk with a kind of instinctive horror from all intimacy with such a woman as the Marchioness of T——: but Mrs. Kitty and her sisters loved the pomps and vanities of the world; so that a title, a magnificent house, with a coach-and-four, had charms sufficient to induce them to overlook many things in the marchioness, which they would have deemed wholly insufferable in any one destitute of her pretensions to rank and fashion. Accordingly, when the marchioness and her daughters came forward, (for, on this occasion, these elegant young ladies condescended to second their mother,) to solicit an intimacy with this family, the three sisters were evidently flattered, and met their advances at least half way. Mrs. Kitty, in particular, was so taken with their attentions, that she could not refrain from commenting on the politeness of the noble strangers, much to this effect—"I am not surprised," said this discerning lady, "at the marchioness's extraordinary politeness to us yesterday, when we had the honour of meeting her at the church-door, nor at the very friendly manner in which she took my hand, and said, she hoped that we should be the best of neighbours; for you know, sisters, that her ladyship's manner is all affability to every one: and though the young ladies have been much complained of as being less conciliatory in their behaviour, they have certainly acted towards us with a distinguishing degree of courtesy. Nothing can be more polite than they always are: yesterday it was more marked than ever, and that in the eyes of all the congregation. Did you notice how Lady Cecilia took the moss rose from her bosom to present to you, Jane? and how Lady Catherine at the very same instant stooped to pick up my glove? Certainly, sister, such manners are very pleasing."

"One must be blind indeed," said Constantia's mother, "not to observe these things—and that pretty youth, Lord William, I am sure nothing could be more polite than he was in handing me into the carriage. Well, when our dear Constantia returns, we shall have great pleasure in introducing her to this charming family."

Thus the sisters encouraged in each other the desire of an intimacy with this noble family; and so assiduously was this desire cultivated on both sides, that a considerable familiarity had grown between the respective parties before the arrival of Constantia. In consequence of which, a day seldom passed, but some one or other of the young ladies called at their neighbour's door in going or returning from an airing; or a beautiful nosegay arrived from the greenhouse: and Mrs. Kitty was not unfrequently complimented by some painted screen or card-rack, or other beautiful toy, painted by the fair hands of the young ladies.

Now it never once occurred to this respectable lady and her sisters that there could be any other motive on the part of the marquis's family for thus courting her friendship, excepting the pleasure which she supposed they took in her society. Thus, for want of that knowledge of herself with which an humble Christian spirit would have inspired her, poor Mrs. Kitty became the dupe of artful persons, whose very appearance and manners ought at once to have induced her to shun them.

But inasmuch as my reader, probably not having the same opinion of Mrs. Kitty's personal or companionable attractions as this good lady herself had, may be somewhat puzzled to account for the trouble which these noble persons took to solicit her friendship, I shall simply specify the true state of the case, which affords a proof that great people are as liable to act from interested motives as persons of less consequence.

The marquis, as we have before said, was not a rich man. His large estate was entailed on his eldest son, and he had but little to give his younger children; a circumstance which caused him and the marchioness no small anxiety to see them advantageously married.

It happened, that the marquis's steward, having been frequently consulted by Honoria, was well acquainted with her affairs. And as persons who have many money concerns generally make these matters the subject of their discourse, it cannot be wondered at if this steward should have often entertained his lord with statements respecting the condition of the estate then in possession of the three sisters, annexing to such statements a reca-

pitulation of several bonds and securities deposited in a certain iron chest, concerning the intricacies of which he had more than once been consulted. The steward also informed his lord, that all these possessions were entailed on Constantia in failure of other grandchildren; adding, that, as Constantia's mother, the youngest of the three, was now considerably above forty, it might be reasonably supposed, that Constantia's chance of inheriting the whole family property amounted to little less than a certainty.

It was scarcely possible for the marquis to see and hear all this, without considering how he and his children might be the better for it: neither did it require much skill to make this matter out, while he had sons scantily provided for, and Constantia was undisposed of. Not indeed that he thought of her for the heir apparent: no; Lord L—— was very handsome, and his great expectations encouraged him to look higher than Constantia; but the fortune of that young lady could not be unacceptable to a poor parson, and might assist in making his parsonage-house a habitable dwelling.

This scheme was no sooner conceived, than imparted to the marchioness, by whom it was fully approved, and communicated to the young ladies, who promised their co-operation. But until Christmas arrived, when both the young people were to be at home, nothing more could be attempted towards furthering these interested views than that assiduous cultivation of Mrs. Kitty's friendship which we have above described.

Thus having fully explained the state of affairs in the neighbourhood, I return to Constantia, whom we have described as being just arrived at home, sincerely rejoicing to see her old friends, yet not a little afflicted at losing the society of Mrs. Garston and her daughter.

Lord Robert had arrived from the University only the day before Constantia's return; and the marquis took the earliest opportunity, after hearing that the young lady was actually in the country, to pay a visit to her aunts, accompanied by his two elder sons, resolving to take that early occasion of opening his plans to his son Robert.

The wily father commenced his operations by stating the value of the living he intended for his son; adding,

that, as he should have nothing further to give him, it would be absolutely necessary for him either to study economy, or to seek a rich wife.

Lord Robert answered, that he could not endure economy; and as to being married, he hated the thought of that also.

By this time, they were come into a lovely dingle, on the estate of the three sisters, shaded by lofty trees, through which the beams of the sun were here and there glancing upon a clear stream, which trickled through a mossy channel in the bottom of the dingle. The marquis pointed out the beauties of the place through which they were passing, together with the fine growth of the trees, many of which, he observed, were extremely valuable as timber; and then abruptly asked his son how he should like to possess the reversion of the estate on which they were walking, with so many acres, a handsome house, and many extra thousands for present use?

Lord Robert answered, that he should have no objection to such an estate, if there were no incumbrances on it.

"Only a wife and three old aunts," replied the elder brother.

"O, as to the aunts," replied Lord Robert, "I would soon plague them to death: but the wife, what kind of thing is she?"

"Why," replied Lord L——, who had accidentally seen Constantia at an inn in the neighbouring town, where the travellers had stopped to change horses, "I would rather have the estate without her; and yet she is not so bad but you may be content to take her into the bargain, since you cannot have her money without herself."

Many inelegant jests now passed between these two brothers, unchecked by their father's presence: for the minds of irreligious persons, in whatever rank of life they move, are, in general, coarse, and their ideas low and depraved. But the result of their discourse was, that Lord Robert should endeavour to make himself agreeable to Constantia; though how to set about it he seemed quite at a loss, as he had never been in the habit of considering any one's humours but his own.

The marquis was pleased to find his son Robert more

accommodating than he expected ; and as by this time they were come near the house, the three gentlemen prepared to make themselves agreeable.

The idea had once or twice glanced across the mind of Mrs. Kitty and Constantia's mother, that one of the marquis's sons might possibly take a fancy to Constantia, and that, in case of a marriage, she would then become a titled lady. They had never looked up to the eldest son, it being reported that he was engaged to a lady of higher pretensions both by birth and fortune than Constantia : but on observing Lord Robert's attentions to the young lady during this morning visit, the idea of a near connexion between the families recurred to their minds, strangely influencing all they did and said, though they hardly knew it themselves.

Poor Constantia's mind was at that time in a pure, simple, and sweet state. Mrs. Garston, from whom only a few days before she had parted with many tears, was fresh in her memory ; while her sweet and modest friend, Miss Garston, was every hour present to her imagination. Her usual studies, the poor people she had patronized, her hours of prayer and meditation, her active and useful employments, only lately broken through—all these things still warmed and filled her mind, and so unfitted her for taking any interest in such men as the marquis and his sons, that when they were departed, and her aunts asked her how she liked the young men, she had nothing to say, but that she could hardly tell. Indeed she scarcely knew which was which, and had totally forgotten what they were talking about.

Constantia did not, however, long retain this happy frame of mind. One week spent in continual intercourse with the family of the marquis, entirely deranged all her better feelings. During that time she had been engaged in one or two private dances ; she had freely conversed with the three young ladies ; had heard Lord Robert talk nonsense ; had been flattered by the marchioness ; had neglected all her studies, and thought of nothing but how to dress, and how to appear fashionable. The thought of returning to Mrs. Garston's began now to be painful to her, and even the sight of her hand-writing excited disagreeable feelings.

Week after week passed away, while one amusement followed another at the mansion of the marquis; and still as the time for leaving home approached, Constantia became less and less willing to return to Mrs. Garston. A slight illness at length forming some slender ground of excuse, she allowed her aunts, who were equally willing with herself that she should return no more to Mrs. Garston, to inform that lady that it was their intention to keep her at home till the weather would permit her travelling with greater comfort and security. They brought the letter, when written, to Constantia, for the purpose of asking her if she would choose to add any thing to it. She took it and read it; she thought it cold and unkind; she wished to add something to it, but found herself strangely affected and averse to write. She gave the letter back to Mrs. Kitty, desiring it might be sent, and running into her own room, she shut the door and burst into an agony of tears. She thought of her grandmother, and of Mrs. Garston, of her dear friend Miss Garston, of the excellent advice they had given her, of the excellent examples they had set before her; and her heart was ready to break. She was, at that time, in so favourable a state, that a judicious friend might have prevailed with her to make any sacrifice, and to have denied self in any point: but after a struggle, not with the evil one, not with the enemy of souls, but with the better feelings of her nature, she became hardened, and resolved to pursue those pleasures which lead to death.

And in this trial, who were the tempters of Constantia? When she would have forsaken the lusts of the flesh, or self-pleasing, who were the most solicitous to lead her back into the way of danger? Were they not those who, as Christians, as guardians, as instructors, should have led her to renounce so destructive a path? O that parents, that sponsors, that all those who undertake the charge of youth, would consider that most awful part of the Church Catechism and baptismal service, wherein they undertake that their little ones shall "renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh!" Let them beware, at least, either intentionally or through inadvertency, of administering to these sinful lusts, and

adding fuel to that fire of inbred corruption which burns within the breast of every unconverted child of Adam.

But to return to Constantia. From this time, her progress towards delusion and error became more rapid, and her situation more perilous. Before Lord Robert returned to Oxford, he made an offer in form to her; and although she neither loved nor esteemed him, yet her vanity being flattered by his attentions and those of the whole family, she allowed her aunts to intimate, that, although she was at present too young to think of marrying, yet, on arriving at a proper age, she might, perhaps, be induced to think of him.

This was quite sufficient for Lord Robert, who immediately made sure of being, some time or other, in possession of her estate and fortune: and Constantia, being now considered as one who was to belong to the marquis's family, was more than ever with them, and especially she was present on every occasion of amusement.

Many months passed away in one continued round of dissipation, but not of happiness to poor Constantia, who, when she dared for a moment to think, remembered with anguish the truly happy days she had spent at Mrs. Garston's; especially that period most dear to her heart, when her venerable grandmother was with them, and when, forgetful of herself, she had studied nothing but the happiness of that dear parent. But now *self* was the subject of her constant thought, and she was never easy but when she found herself the object of attention in public. When abroad, her spirits, supported by vanity, became uncontrollably high; and when at home, she was languid, capricious, haughty, and fretful. In this state Constantia once again became sensible what it was to be under the dominion of misguided affections, attended with strong and sickly cravings after earthly pleasures. Of all that she enjoyed, nothing satisfied her: she had a restless and incessant wish for something new; and in proportion as her caprices were indulged, her desires became more irregular and violent.

Constantia had now entered her eighteenth year, several months of which had already passed away, when Lord L——, who had been from home some weeks, re-

turned, with several young noblemen of his acquaintance; and Lord Robert at the same time coming home for the long vacation, the marquis's mansion became the seat of unusual festivity, where Constantia was continually engaged in some new scene of amusement, and where she appeared to be the darling of the noble party in which she was always found.

It was at length proposed by the marchioness to give an entertainment of unusual splendour, on account of the birth-day of Lord L——. There was to be a ball; after which the company were to be amused with fireworks; when a temple, which was built as an object on the other side of a beautiful piece of water in front of the house, was to be illuminated in a splendid manner.

Constantia and the young ladies were busily engaged for some time in making and directing preparations for this evening; on which occasion Constantia's dress was to be supereminently elegant.

Poor Constantia, in the mean time, seemed to be totally borne away in the torrent of delusion: at which indeed we can the less wonder, since her aunts and her mother, who had hitherto been considered as remarkably discreet persons, seemed to be as entirely led away by the vain and gay family of the marquis, as even Constantia herself. But they had never at any time resolved to give up the world, neither had they ever seen its dangers in a just point of view; so that now, being stimulated by ambition, they, as many others have been before them, were carried to greater lengths of compliance with foolish and unreasonable customs than they might at one time have conceived possible. They saw the levity of the marchioness and her daughters, yet allowed Constantia to be their constant companion; and they daily witnessed the profane and profligate proceedings of Lord Robert, while they considered him as the future husband of Constantia. Thus were they hourly losing their sense of right and wrong, and were eagerly hastening through a path which must have led them to destruction, if the Almighty himself had not in mercy interfered, and plucked them as brands out of the fire.

The important day at length arrived: when Constantia, arrayed in an elegant dress of silver crape, accompanied her aunts and her mother in their own coach to

the marquis's house; Constantia being in the highest possible spirits, having just contemplated herself with the utmost satisfaction in a large mirror which hung in her dressing-room.

On their arrival at the marquis's, the gaiety of the scene, the concourse of fashionably dressed persons, the music, and the attentions paid her particularly by the young noblemen, tended still more to raise Constantia's spirits. She talked; she laughed; she affected to dance with peculiar vivacity; she assumed a childish playful manner; smiled continually when there was no occasion, and was certainly in a state as much to be dreaded by a Christian female as that of intoxication by spirituous liquors, or any other mode of inebriety—a state in which vanity and the desire of attracting universal attention had entirely overcome her better judgment.

And here I cannot refrain from remarking, that situations which excite feelings of this kind, ought to be carefully guarded against by every Christian parent, as tending directly to sin, and remotely to shame—though every acute observer of human nature must perceive, that those who cannot but be deeply interested in the welfare of their children, are as liable to be intoxicated by their success in the world, as even the young persons themselves; so that nearly as many young women, it is to be feared, are ruined by the vanity of their mothers as by their own proper weakness.

Constantia's aunts, who were sitting by observing the dance, perceived that their niece was in a state of unusual elevation; insomuch that Mrs. Jane feared she might fatigue herself by over exertion, though she made no effort to check the exuberant overflow of her spirits. The dance continued some hours; after which, while the party were waiting for supper, the window-shutters of the ball-room were thrown open, in order to afford the party a view of the fireworks and the illuminated temple.

There were few persons in the room who cared whether they saw the fireworks or not: since these kind of things, when once seen, instantly satiate, being poor and paltry imitations of that glory which appears almost daily in the works of God. For who that has had

an opportunity of frequently beholding the sun in his splendour, amid all the glories of the morning and evening clouds, can take any delight in such poor and mean imitations of the brilliant appearances of light and fire in the natural world as man can produce?

Notwithstanding the general feeling which scenes of this kind excite, the whole party assembled at the marquis's crowded to the windows as soon as the shutters were opened, and the room was filled with exclamations to this purpose: "O! how beautiful! O! how exquisite! Nothing can equal this!" Some of the young people, the foremost of whom was Constantia leaning on Lord Robert's arm, insisted that the windows should be opened, in order to see the fireworks to more advantage.

This proposal was opposed by all the prudent elderly persons in the room, who represented to the young people, that being then so extremely heated with dancing, the evening air might be very injurious to them.

Constantia and the young ladies of the family were, however, too full of themselves at that moment to hear reason, or even to attend to the dictates of politeness: Constantia declared that she was suffocated with heat, and Lord Robert was desired to throw up the window; which was no sooner done, than a great part of the company withdrew, leaving the window free for Lord Robert, Constantia, and a few more young people equally headstrong.

Mrs. Kitty and Mrs. Jane, seeing Constantia's situation, now thought proper to expostulate. They drew near their niece, bringing with them a shawl, which Mrs. Jane threw over her shoulders, while Mrs. Kitty began to point out to her the danger of exposing herself to the evening air immediately after taking so much violent exercise.

Constantia no sooner felt the shawl, than she tossed it from her upon her aunt's arm; and hearing at the same moment a proposal from Lord Robert that they should make a party to go to a bridge in the shrubbery, which was laid across a narrow part of the piece of water, in order to get from thence a nearer view of the illuminated temple—without taking the smallest notice of Mrs. Kitty's expostulation, or even condescending to

answer her, she ran off with Lord Robert and several more young people to the bridge.

Mrs. Kitty and Mrs. Jane now became inconceivably uneasy, not about Constantia's improper conduct, but from the danger she incurred of catching cold, so that they went in haste to seek their own servant to follow Constantia with the shawl. But though the servant ran as fast as he possibly could to the bridge, he was not able to overtake Constantia, who, with her giddy companions, had returned to the house another way, nor did he reach her with the shawl till she was seated at the supper-table by Lord Robert.

The servant then coming up, respectfully presented the shawl, and Constantia would very quietly have allowed it to be placed over her shoulders, if Lord Robert had not whispered something, which he meant to be very witty, about the great care taken of her by her aunts; upon which she rejected the shawl again, although she now really began to feel that some extra covering was become necessary: for after having sat down for a very short time, she had felt herself affected with a chill, which increased every minute; accompanied with this unpleasant sensation, that while her limbs were cold, her cheeks glowed with a burning heat, which presently spread itself all over her face and neck. She at length began, though in a way still full of levity, to complain that she was not quite well, that she was thirsty, and oppressed with a peculiar sense of lassitude; and Lord Robert, who hardly knew, from her manner, whether she was in jest or earnest, was offering her the accommodation of a sofa at the other end of the room, if she wished for repose; when the servant again appeared, bringing her from Mrs. Kitty some white soup, which he set before her, with a message from her aunt, who was seated at the other end of the table, requesting her not to reject it, as it might prevent her taking cold.

"Take it away," said Constantia haughtily and rudely to the servant. "How could my aunt think of sending me such odious stuff? she knows I never take any thing of the kind."

"But you will take something?" said Lord Robert: and he put some ice on her plate.

Constantia was not particularly fond of ice; but being at this time in a humour to do every thing which she knew to be contrary to her aunts' advice, she partook of the ice, although Mrs. Kitty and Mrs. Jane, by several expressive looks from their distant part of the table, implored her not to touch it.

Constantia ate the ice, notwithstanding all that her kind friends could do to prevent it. She had already caught a violent cold, by exposing herself suddenly to the night air when heated by dancing; and now the ice, received internally, very materially increased the evil. The blood, suddenly driven from the extremities, rose to her head; her eyes became dim, and her face violently flushed; her limbs trembled; her head swam; and she was at length, though manifestly with much reluctance, compelled to rise from the supper-table and leave the room.

Lord Robert expressed some uneasiness at her sudden indisposition. He led her out of the room, and delivered her to the care of her affrighted mother and aunts; and then returning to the company, he soon recovered his cheerfulness, by taking a few glasses of wine more than usual.

In the mean time, the poor Constantia, whose season of trial thus took its rise, was led up to a room appointed for her, where something hot was immediately given her to drink. But as she still continued very ill, a medical man, who happened then to be with the company below, was sent for, and made acquainted with her situation.

The morning was now breaking, when Constantia begged and implored to be taken home, and that with such earnestness, that her aunts and mother, who had never been in the habit of contradicting her, suffered themselves to be persuaded to grant her request, though contrary to the advice of the medical attendant. They excused themselves to the marchioness, who came up to see her beloved Constantia, as she called her, after the guests were departed; and taking care that their niece was carefully wrapped up, they conveyed her home as speedily as possible, where she was put into a warm bed, and every means made use of that could be devised to stop the progress of a fever, which was coming on with a rapidity sufficient to alarm every one about her.

For more than a fortnight Constantia's life appeared to be in the greatest danger. During this interval, the marchioness and her daughters sent to make daily enquiries, and indeed often called themselves; though they did not see Constantia, because it was thought proper to keep her quiet.

At the end of this interval, Constantia's life being pronounced out of danger, the marquis's family, having proposed for some time going to the sea, whither also they had at one period wished Constantia and the elder ladies to accompany them, now took their leave of the country for some weeks, having previously called to say, that they hoped Mrs. Kitty would let them often hear from her concerning the health of their beloved Constantia; and Lord Robert at the same time expressed a hope that, on his return, he should be permitted to see her, muttering some confused speech about his sufferings since her illness from extreme anxiety on her account.

Thus the noble party took their leave, when Mrs. Kitty and her sisters were left to watch in solitude the slow and very imperfect recovery of poor Constantia. Her fever, after a while, left her; but it left her without the use of her limbs. From the time of her first attack, she became quite lame, and unable to walk, even across the room, without assistance. But what she looked upon at that time as a still greater affliction, was a settled redness in her face, which so entirely altered and disfigured her, that no one of her former acquaintance could suddenly have known her. She kept her bed for many weeks, but at length was enabled to be removed to her dressing-room.

It was a gloomy day in the autumn of that very year begun by Constantia with such prospects of worldly prosperity, that this unhappy young creature (unhappy because, as yet, she could not submit with tolerable humility to the affliction which she had brought on herself by her own imprudence) was conveyed from her chamber to her dressing-room, and laid on a sofa, nearly opposite that mirror in which she had surveyed herself with so much pleasure on the unfortunate day of the ball at the marquis's. The mirror had not been removed; and as she sat up, supported by pillows, she caught a glimpse of her altered face, which affected her so

greatly as to produce a flood of tears. Her aunts very kindly enquired the cause of her tears, and attempted to sooth her: but she would hear nothing they had to say by way of comfort, continually breaking out into fresh expressions of sorrow.

While she still continued weeping, a carriage drove up to the door, and a servant soon came to announce the arrival of the marchioness and her daughters, with Lord Robert. "Oh!" said Constantia, covering her face with her hands, "let me not see them; hide me from them; I am ashamed to appear before them."

"We will go down," said Mrs. Kitty, "and at least excuse you for to-day."

She accordingly went down, and so far succeeded as to prevail on the marchioness and Lord Robert to stay below: but the three young ladies, slipping by her, ran up into Constantia's dressing-room, where they had often been received in the days of their indiscreet familiarity, being curious to ascertain whether she were so entirely changed by her illness as report had led them to expect.

Constantia was so much affected when her three gay companions entered the room, and in their heartless and unfeeling manner, yet with an affectation of pity, condoled with her on her unhappy situation, that she was totally unable to enter into conversation with them. She thought their manners towards her were quite altered, and she knew not how to account for the change. After a few expressions of sympathy, they took their leave; and availing themselves of the first opportunity of being alone with their brother, they told him, in answer to his enquiries, that Constantia was so entirely changed that they should not have known her, and that they thought she had very little chance of ever being at all like what she was before. "In short," added they, laughing, "she is become quite ugly."

"Well then," said Lord Robert, "as soon as a proper opportunity presents itself, I shall take a polite leave of her; and I have reason to think I may do quite as well in point of fortune elsewhere."

"But what will my father say?" returned one of the young ladies: "I know he has a great attachment to Constantia's estate."

“I shall say nothing on the subject,” replied Lord Robert, “but shall ask his permission to-morrow to pay my compliments to my aunt at Bath. The old lady has often invited me; and where is the wonder if I find it particularly convenient to visit her at this time?”

The young ladies smiled: and Lord Robert, having made the before-mentioned request to his father, took his leave, in a day or two, for Bath, where he spent the little remainder of his long vacation; having previously written a very polite note to Constantia, expressing his hopes that her health might speedily be restored.

To this note Constantia made no answer, but she became daily more and more dejected, refusing all comfort, and wasting her unhappy days in hopeless inactivity. And thus closed the eighteenth year of the life of Constantia, bringing her to that particular period which her grandmother had fixed for her leaving Mrs. Garston.

Constantia's birth-day had always been kept with considerable parade in the family; but this year the family intended it to pass by without any extraordinary notice. In this hope, however, they were disappointed. Constantia had not forgotten the day, nor had she failed to make such reflections as the recurrence of the period naturally suggested. When an old and confidential servant, who had been accustomed to attend her for many years, came, as usual, to dress her, she found her bathed in tears; and on endeavouring to administer to her some words of comfort, she was addressed by Constantia in a manner which but too fully betrayed the bitterness of her feelings. “This day,” said the unhappy young woman, “I enter my nineteenth year, the period fixed by my ever beloved grandmother for my leaving Mrs. Garston's.” Here she paused a moment, and again broke out—“Oh! had I remained till now at Mrs. Garston's, one year of danger and sin would have been avoided; my ruin would at least have been delayed *one* year; and by that delay, perhaps, I might entirely have escaped my present misfortunes. Had I been favoured with friends who would have used the authority given them by God and the superior knowledge acquired by years, in compelling me to do what was right, I had now, perhaps, been a virtuous, cheerful, and contented young

woman. But what, alas, is my present situation? Left to the indulgence of my own headstrong passions, all my prospects in life are blasted! I am undone!—undone by cruel indulgence!—and have nothing to look forward to but an early death, or a life of protracted suffering!”

Here the servant interposed, and urged the duty under which she conceived her young mistress lay of not attributing her afflictions to her friends, who, if they had erred, had surely erred on the side of kindness.

“Kindness!” retorted Constantia, “how mistaken are your notions of kindness! Why does God give authority to parents? why does he place little children in their arms in a state of utter helplessness, but in order that they may use the authority they possess, in subduing their wayward passions, and compelling them, as far as human influence can go, to act discreetly? Why are wisdom and experience given to a mother, but in order that her child may be the better for them? And why do parents and sponsors ‘renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh,’ on the part of children, if parental authority is not also called in to give force to this solemn act?”

Here again the servant interposed, excusing the conduct of her ladies on the score of excessive kindness.

“Kindness!” repeated Constantia a second time, “it was not the sort of kindness which I experienced from Mrs. Garston, when she used all the influence which her situation, her age, and her experience gave her, to compel me to do right, to force me to become amiable, respectable, and happy.”

Here Constantia’s agony of mind became too much for her weak frame, and the servant was obliged to administer hartshorn to her, in order to keep off a fainting-fit.

It happened, that Mrs. Kitty and her sister, who were in an anteroom, overheard a great part of this conversation. What their feelings were on this occasion is not easy to describe: they were not, however, of the right kind, as from that time, though they still loved Constantia, they felt considerable irritation against her, which often broke out in peevish expressions to this

purpose—"We know that we are blamed on account of our niece's malady; it is attributed to some carelessness of ours, but very unjustly: however, we must bear our share of the afflictions fallen on the family: we cannot help it: but the world is ungrateful."

These and such like expressions, which were frequently thrown out in the hearing of Constantia, did not add to her good-humour: on the contrary, she became daily more uneasy in herself, and seemed more and more anxious to fly from her own thoughts. And as she was debarred from all public and active amusements by the state of her health, without being able to take any delight in religion, her injudiciously indulgent friends provided her with a constant succession of amusing books, which, with cards for their evening entertainment, filled up the day.

Thus passed several years. Constantia experienced no amendment of health, although every thing was tried which could be thought of, and several journeys made on her account to the sea and elsewhere. Lord Robert, in the mean time, married a fashionable woman, of low family, but immense fortune: in consequence of which, and his extremely dishonourable conduct to Constantia, all intercourse ceased between her family and that of the marquis.

During this period, Mrs. Garston had left her house near London, and retired to the North of England, with her lovely daughter, who was married to a pious young clergyman in that part of the country. She had written several times to Constantia; but as Constantia was not able to answer her letters herself, their epistolary intercourse, after proving very unsatisfactory, at length ceased.

Ten or twelve years had now passed away, bringing us near to the close of the life of poor Constantia—a life begun, as far as man could judge, under the most promising circumstances, but rendered truly miserable through the injudicious kindness of friends, by which those natural selfish feelings and cravings of the will, which should have been suppressed, were encouraged and fostered, till they at length worked the entire destruction of all her prospects in the present world. But, through the infinite mercy of God, we trust that Constantia's last

hours afforded a hope of everlasting emancipation from sin, with all its miserable consequences.

When Constantia's illness had continued for twelve years, with little increase or diminution, it suddenly took a turn, which rendered it evident that her life was speedily drawing to a termination. Constantia was terrified at the approach of death, which now stared her in the face; and, being thereby hurried into a state of great perplexity, she found herself compelled to seek for other comforters than romances and cards. In the anguish of her mind she remembered Mrs. Garston, and begged that a letter might be written to her, requesting her immediate presence.

Mrs. Garston was at this time too old to undertake so long a journey: but Mrs. Nevil (formerly Miss Garston) determined instantly to obey the summons in the place of her mother. Accordingly, leaving her younger children under the care of that dear parent, she, with her husband and eldest daughter, a lovely child of nine years of age, hastened to visit her still dear Constantia. The meeting was a very painful one on both sides: Mrs. Nevil was much shocked at the state both of mind and body in which she found her old friend; and Constantia's regrets at the entire ruin of her earthly prospects were renewed in their utmost force when she looked at the still youthful and habitually placid countenance of Mrs. Nevil.

The afflicted Constantia took the first opportunity of opening her heart to her friend, giving her a full account of her early disappointments and subsequent melancholy life: neither did she fail on this occasion to exhibit those feelings of bitterness, which she entertained against her indiscreetly indulgent parent and aunts.

Mrs. Nevil heard her throughout with all the patience and tenderness which might be expected from a person of her affectionate and Christian character; nor did she wait long for an opportunity of pointing her afflicted friend to the only source of comfort under all the trials of life.

"Speak not to me of religion," replied Constantia peevishly: "I have again and again endeavoured to draw consolation from that source; but have only found an increase of anguish. No! no! religion has no so-

lace for me! I am miserable, and have been made so by the cruel and selfish indulgence of my relations, who, to spare themselves the trouble of contending with me, allowed me to run headlong into destruction!"

"O! Constantia! dear Constantia!" said Mrs. Nevil, "is this right? or can you expect to find comfort in religion while you persist in laying the blame of your own faults upon your affectionate relatives? Rather, pray that you may be enabled to feel and acknowledge that stubbornness of will, which rendered it necessary for you to be exercised by these severe afflictions; and entreat that such a blessing may be poured upon your sufferings as may prepare you to come forth from them like gold tried in the fire."

Mrs. Nevil then spoke somewhat largely on the duties of patience and resignation, remarking, that these must be possessed before any real religious comfort can be obtained; "since we are informed," added she, "that tribulation, when divinely blessed, worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; even that hope which maketh not ashamed."

Constantia heard her throughout with impatience, and then remarked, with some heat, that it was easy for one surrounded with every earthly blessing, as Mrs. Nevil seemed to be, to preach patience and resignation. "But if it is hard," added she, with a bitter smile, "for the martyr to triumph at the stake, it is equally difficult for me to look back on the past, or forward to the future, without such a feeling of despair and anguish as I cannot describe."

"Then," said Mrs. Nevil, with unaltered sweetness, "look neither forward to the future, nor backward to the past, my beloved Constantia; but look alone to Him who, for your sake, underwent such afflictions as no mere man could endure. Look to Him; compare your trials with his; behold his tears, his bloody agonies, his wounds, his bruises, his endurance of the divine anger; and then ask yourself, if he who loved you so well as to bear all these things for your sake, would have afflicted you, had he not seen that afflictions were needful in your case. My beloved mother, in the happy days we spent together, often spoke to you of that change of heart which must take place before we can enter the

kingdom of heaven. Mere afflictions are indeed powerless in effecting this change ; but they are often rendered instrumental, by the divine blessing, in softening the heart, and so facilitating this great work : and many there are now in heaven, who have been brought thither through much fiercer and more fiery trials than those to which you have been condemned, my beloved friend. But their anguish is now no longer remembered, and all tears are wiped from their eyes. Clothed in the garments of salvation, and dignified with an unfading crown, they praise, without ceasing, that blessed Redeemer through whose grace their short afflictions, which endured but for a moment, wrought for them such an exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

While Mrs. Nevil spoke, Constantia shed tears—a relief which of late she had seldom been able to obtain ; and taking Mrs. Nevil's hand, "O my Harriet!" she said, "O that I were as good as you!—then, indeed, might I look forward with hope to those joys of which you speak in a world to come. O! had I but half your merits——"

"My merits!" repeated Mrs. Nevil, shaking her head ; "what are the merits of the most perfect of created beings? not capable, depend upon it, of removing or expiating the smallest sin that ever was committed. No! throughout all creation, not one being was ever found capable of making an atonement for fallen man. Hence the dreadful mistake of those who trust to their own good works to counterbalance their evil actions. Were my good qualities such as you suppose, or ten thousand times more excellent, I would not depend on them for salvation : no, my friend, the Scriptures hold out to us a better hope ; and this is the hope I would wish you to embrace."

Constantia wept again, and wringing her hands, replied, "What can I do, confined as I am to this wretched room, without comfort, without power, without the means of doing any good? O my friend, I can do nothing! I am lost! I am undone! I am without help!"

"Man," returned Mrs. Nevil, "must ever remain a stranger to the exercise of divine hope till he can say from his heart, 'I am lost ; I am undone ; I am without help :'

and this is the state to which your heavenly Father meant to bring you, when he laid upon you this severe and long-continued affliction."

Mrs. Nevil then, seeing that Constantia was listening attentively to her, proceeded to mention several of the most important truths of our holy religion; many of which had been laid before her by Mrs. Garston, while the unfortunate young woman resided in Berkshire, but which, never having been admitted by faith into her heart, had been easily driven from her head by other matters. She stated to her, in the first place, all that is known of the nature of the Trinity in Unity, together with the mighty work of man's salvation, as planned before the creation of the first man, ere this mighty earth had commenced its wondrous course. She pointed out the completeness of this work, and how, in instances more numerous than the stars of heaven or the sands of the sea, it is begun, continued, and finished, for the benefit of individuals, in a way altogether beyond their conception, and frequently where the will rises against it in the most furious opposition. She then proceeded to say something of the distinct characters and offices of the three Persons of the Trinity; enlarging upon the love of the Father, the sufferings of the Son, and the operations of the Spirit: observing how this last deals with the souls of men, breaking down the strong holds of *self*, and constraining the individual to cry out, "I am undone; I am without help;" thus laying him in the dust, in order finally to raise him up and set him with Christ Jesus in heavenly places, where he is appointed to shine as the stars in the firmament for ever and ever.

This conversation was greatly blessed to Constantia, who often took occasion to renew the subject; so that before Mrs. Nevil had been many weeks with her friend, she witnessed such a change in her as could be attributed to nothing less than a divine influence.

The first apparent effect of grace in Constantia, was an apology which she made to her friends for the many hasty expressions she had used towards them, and especially concerning the management of her in youth. She laid the blame of all her misfortunes on her own hasty temper, and confessed that her afflictions were far less than she had deserved.

This change in the poor distressed Constantia was evident to all around her, and became a subject of much wonder to those who could not comprehend the power of grace over the human passions. In the mean time, as her soul continued to advance from strength to strength, and to ripen for glory, her body became weaker and weaker: nevertheless, owing to the removal of the complaint from the head, shortly before her death, her features and complexion recovered in a great measure their former appearance; affording her friends the unexpected satisfaction of once again beholding that very face and countenance, upon which they had formerly gazed with so much delight. Neither was it a small consolation to Mrs. Nevil, to see the countenance of her dying friend embellished with every touching expression of divine love and holy hope.

Some of the last words uttered by Constantia, were an expression of thankfulness for those afflictions, whereby her path had been hedged to the right and to the left, and she had been prevented from plunging into those destructive pleasures which would have ended in spiritual death.

I am happy, in concluding this story, to be enabled to say, that the society of Mr. and Mrs. Nevil, together with the death of their beloved Constantia, were in some degree blessed to Mrs. Kitty and her sisters, who from that period renounced those light amusements with which they had hitherto beguiled so large a portion of their time, and devoted themselves much to the duties of serious reading and benevolent attention to the poor.

Here the lady of the manor closed her book, and as the story of Constantia had occupied a longer time than she expected, the young people, after a short prayer, were obliged to disperse in haste.

A Second Prayer for Assistance in the Regulation of the Will.

“O HOLY Lord God, forasmuch as, by the influences of thy blessed Spirit, we have been led to see that the will of the natural man is ever rising in opposition to thine, we humbly supplicate thee to shed upon us the

graces of that blessed Spirit, which alone can enable us to conform our desires to thy pleasure, and to devote ourselves without reserve to thy service. Enable us, O heavenly Father, on every occasion, and in every circumstance of our lives, to say, 'Thy will, not ours, be done.' Teach us to observe the indications of thy will; and *as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so may our eyes wait upon thee our God.* Lead us into a happy imitation of those saints in ancient days, who, by a faithful submission to thy holy will, obtained a good report, and, confessing themselves to be pilgrims and strangers upon earth, looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

"It is required of us, O Lord, to deny the lusts of the flesh, and to crucify our earthly affections. To thee, O God, and to thee only, we look for help so to do; confessing our weakness, and bewailing our rebellious disposition. We know that we cannot please thee by any efforts or exertions made in our own proper strength: leave us not, therefore, we earnestly beseech thee, to our own lusts and passions. Let not sin have dominion over us. Hedge us in on the right and on the left, lest we forsake thy way; and suffer us never to depart from thee, nor to take the management of our concerns into our own hands. Bless unto us the instruction with which thou hast favoured us; grant that those who water, and those who are watered, may be equally the objects of thy divine favour. Finally, we beseech thee, guide us through this life by thy counsels, and afterwards receive us into glory.

"And now to God the Father," &c.

CHAPTER IX.

Secondly, that I should believe all the Articles of the Christian Faith.

WHEN the young party were again assembled in the presence of their excellent and highly revered instructress, they conversed for some time on the history of Constantia, comparing her character with that of Theodosia: and the lady of the manor failed not to observe, that the happiness of the one and her excellent conduct under affliction, with the unhappiness of the other even when in the most prosperous circumstances, were owing to the different states of their respective feelings. As one possessed a will subdued and conformed to that of God, so the other was continually the prey of wayward inclinations and vehement desires, which never could be satisfied. The lady of the manor then concluded the conversation by again pointing out, that no creature can enjoy true happiness until the lusts of the flesh are subdued within him; inasmuch as these lusts, working in opposition to the will of God, are constantly exciting gloomy and dissatisfied feelings, not only towards the Creator himself, but towards parents, ministers, magistrates, and all who are placed in authority under God. "But," continued the lady of the manor, "we must now leave this subject which has so long occupied our attention, and proceed to other parts of the Church Catechism." Upon which, turning to Miss Louisa with a look of friendly regard, she requested her to say what her godfathers and godmothers had promised for her, secondarily, in her baptism.

The young lady answered, "Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith."

“Before we proceed to an explanation of this part of the Church Catechism,” said the lady of the manor, “I think it proper to point out to you, my dear young people, an idea which has more than once suggested itself to me when considering the baptismal vow. Our Church Catechism, as I have before remarked, though an excellent form of words, and containing much that is truly admirable in a very short compass, is, I fear, from its extreme succinctness, often liable to lead ignorant persons into error, and should therefore be seldom used without some judicious explanation. In that part of it falling under our late and present consideration,” continued she, “it is stated, that the sponsor undertakes three things in the name of the child: first, that he shall ‘renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanities of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh;’ and, secondly, that he shall ‘believe all the articles of the Christian faith.’ To a hasty observer,” proceeded she, “it might appear, from the arrangement of the articles of this vow, that it was held by our Church as a possible and probable thing, that the renouncing of sin in its various forms should go before faith; whereas we are told, that *without faith it is impossible to please God; that he who cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, (Heb. xi. 6,)—and although, independent of the authority of Scripture, the experience of six thousand years proves, without the shadow of a doubt, that all attempts made by man to do well in his own strength have either utterly failed, and ended in open shame, or in what perhaps is still more to be dreaded, in self-exultation and an impious attempt to establish the independence of the creature in defiance of the Creator. We do not, however, presume to hint, that the pious compilers of our Church Catechism,” continued she, “had any ideas of this kind: we rather wonder at their producing a work with so few defects; at the same time, we well know that no production of man can be perfect. We are anxious, nevertheless, to give faith its proper place before works, the place allowed it by our articles, which are to this purpose: ‘Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification,

cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith; insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.—Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant in the sight of God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the school-authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.' (12th and 13th Articles of the Church.)

“Man is naturally disposed to exalt himself, and lower his Maker; but faith confines the creature to his own humble place, and establishes the Almighty on that throne from which proud man would willingly pluck him in order to exalt the idol self. Faith, then, we presume,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “must be antecedent to the renewal of our nature, and should therefore be the first gift demanded by the parent and the sponsor at the hand of infinite mercy and free grace, in order to the formation of the character of the young Christian.

“And now, my dear young people,” continued the lady of the manor, “before we proceed any further, I think it right to endeavour at least to explain to you the nature of faith. Faith, in its simplest form, is a dependence on the veracity of another. This kind of trust is called faith, because it relies on the truth of a promise; and an individual is said to keep his faith inviolate, when he strictly performs the promise which he has made to another. Faith is commonly distinguished by divines into four kinds, namely,—*Historical Faith, Temporary Faith, The Faith of Miracles, and Justifying Faith.*

“*Historical Faith*, my dear young people,” proceeded the lady, “is a bare assent of the mind to the truths revealed in Scripture, and is thus spoken of by St. James: *Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. —Was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?* (James ii. 17, 25.) He who merely believes that the circumstances related in history concerning an indi-

vidual are true, may be said to possess an historical faith: but, inasmuch as this bare belief has no influence upon his conduct, his faith is merely historical; and, in consequence, is dead, cold, and fruitless. This kind of faith is possessed by devils; for, as St. James says, *Thou believest that there is one God; the devils also believe, and tremble.* (James ii. 19.)

“*Temporary Faith*,” continued the gentle instructress, “rises one degree above historical faith. Together with the knowledge of, and assent to, revealed truths, it is connected with some degree of approbation, and a certain pleasure in receiving and hearing these truths; but this joy arising from the mixture of some worldly consideration, it soon vanishes and comes to nothing. Of this kind of faith our Saviour speaks in the parable of the sower, (*Matt. xiii. 21.*)—He that receiveth the seed into stony places, receives it with joy—he understands it, he assents to it, he hears it gladly, considers and approves of it; yea, it springs up in an outward profession and reformation: yet bath it not life in itself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation and persecution arise because of the word, the professor of such a faith is by and by offended. There are multitudes of persons in this present day whose faith is of this description—many who, being attracted by some fine preacher, make a temporary and splendid profession, and, being encouraged thereto by the praises of their fellow-creatures, seem to be making rapid advances in the heavenly road: but presently, finding some difficulty in the way, or being removed into those scenes and that kind of society where excitements to appear religious no longer exist, they fall away, and the glory of their profession evaporates as the dew of the morning.

“The third kind of faith,” continued the lady of the manor, “is the *Faith of Miracles*; that is, a firm assent of the mind to some particular promise concerning any miraculous event. With reference to this species of faith our Saviour thus speaks in *Matt. xvii. 20.*—*Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

“The fourth and last kind of faith,” proceeded the

lady of the manor, “ is *Justifying Faith*. This is a saving grace wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, whereby we receive Christ, as he is revealed in the Gospel, under the several appropriate titles of Prophet, Priest, and King; whereby also the individual is enabled to trust in him, relying on his righteousness alone for justification and salvation. This faith produces a sincere obedience in the life and conversation. In Heb. xi. 1, 2, it is thus described—*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.* Of this faith and its effects it is impossible to say too much; since it raises the sinner from a state of pollution and misery to a state of holiness and happiness, converting fallen man into a son of God and an heir of glory. This faith not only assures the individual on whom it is bestowed of the reality and worth of eternal and invisible things; but it produces also a satisfactory and assured confidence that God will infallibly perform what he has promised, whereby the believer becomes as completely satisfied of his own salvation as if his heavenly mansion were immediately before his eyes or in his actual possession. The object of this faith is the Word of God in general, and especially those doctrines and promises which respect the salvation of man through Christ, which reason can neither discover by its own light, nor perfectly understand when revealed.

“ The essential, supreme perfections of God form the firm foundation of Scriptural faith; such as his unerring knowledge, his immutable truth, his infinite goodness, and his almighty power. This faith has a prevailing influence upon the will; it moves the affections; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. The very first effect produced in the heart by faith, is a conviction of the sinner’s unbelief. All human beings are naturally infidels, though few will acknowledge this even to themselves: to convince them therefore of this, is one of the primary operations of faith. Hence our Saviour declares, in speaking of the coming of the Spirit, *When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.* (John xvi. 8—10.)

“Such persons as have been brought up in a Christian country, and among the ordinary sort of nominal Christians,” continued the lady of the manor, “commonly take it for granted that they are believers: but even supposing that they may acknowledge themselves to have some doubts; yet they have by nature no sense whatever of the heinousness of this sin of unbelief, but acquiesce, nay, not unfrequently glory in this state of infidelity. Such being the case, it is necessary, as I before said, that he who is to be converted must be first convinced of unbelief, which cannot be brought about by any natural means, or by any efforts of unassisted reason. Here, then, my young people, you are furnished with a test by which you may in some degree ascertain your present state as to spiritual things. Have you ever been convinced of unbelief? Have you been made to see that the time *was* in which you lived without God in the world? Has it ever happened to you to doubt the sincerity of your belief? Have not each of you at all times from your earliest infancy been in the habit of counting yourselves among the number of believing Christians? Have you ever been led to suspect that you were not such? Let me tell you, that if you have never had any suspicions of this kind, the Holy and Blessed Spirit has not yet commenced his operations upon your hearts; neither have you yet been admitted even into the outer courts of the temple. Our Lord says, *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?* (John iii. 12.)

“And here I must remark, that our professing friends often deal with us in a way very different from that which our Divine Teacher adopts. How common is it for our earthly connexions, when they think they can perceive any thing promising in us, to endeavour to promote our advancement in the Christian course by words of flattery, instead of labouring with all their might to convince us of our natural unbelief, and the deadly nature of this sin! Thus hollow professors are produced without end in religious societies; young beginners are thus taught to be hypocrites; while all the arts of civilized society and all the abilities of the natural man are set to work to render the deception as complete as possible in the eyes of every beholder. It is alarming,”

continued the lady of the manor, "to observe the perfection of character to which mere professors may seem to approach, and to what a surprising degree such persons frequently carry the art of self-deception. But, inasmuch as I know that you do not love abstract discussions, instead of enlarging my present discourse, I shall content myself with reading to you a little narrative, which is much to our present purpose."

The History of Jenetta Mannering; related by herself shortly before her Death.

"My name is Jenetta Mannering. My father was the son of a person who cultivated a small estate of his own, near a certain town in Staffordshire; the name of which, to use a form of speech authorized by a certain Spanish writer of high celebrity, *I do not choose to remember*. My father was brought up to trade and settled in the town of Leeds, in Yorkshire, where, having made a pretty property, he married, but dying immediately after my birth, left me to the sole charge of my mother, who continued to reside in the same house in which she had lost her husband. Accordingly, in this house, which afforded one of the few remaining specimens of the architecture of the seventeenth century as exhibited in a common dwelling-house, I first became conscious of my existence, and found myself placed under the care of a tender mother, having no companions of my own age, and seeing no other inmates than a Mrs. Hannah Wingfield, (whom I never remember in any other form but that of a stiff, wrinkled old woman,) together with two female servants, whose prim and obsolete appearance were perfectly consistent with the venerable aspect of the place of their habitation.

"My mother was the most conscientious of parents; but it is difficult beyond measure, nay, perhaps, beyond the strength of unassisted man, to bring up an only child in that simplicity and that freedom from selfishness which are however absolutely necessary, humanly speaking, to the formation of a fine character. We know indeed that the grace of God is sufficient to counteract in any individual the most adverse circumstances of education. Notwithstanding which, as the Almighty com-

monly works by means, that parent who uses not the appointed means for the improvement of the character of his child, has no right to expect the blessing of God upon that child.

“In one point, and that a most important one, my mother entirely failed in her management of me, although it has pleased God to exhibit his mercy towards me in counteracting this error of my education. But inasmuch as my sufferings have been extremely severe, and my danger, humanly speaking, of final reprobation, in consequence of this failure of prudence in my mother, at one time certainly very great, I beseech all parents, and especially professing parents, who may hereafter read this history, cautiously to observe and avoid that unhappy error of judgment whereby my well-meaning but injudicious mother, to say the least, made total shipwreck of my prosperity on earth.

“My mother and Mrs. Hannah Wingfield were closely united to a religious society, which at that time was contained within the bosom of the Church of England; and being fully convinced of the just opinions and laudable purposes of this society, they assisted it to the extent of their pecuniary means, as well as with all the little influence which persons in their retired sphere of life might be supposed to possess.

“It was natural for my mother to associate with such persons as had the same views of religion with herself. In consequence of which, during my childhood, I seldom saw any other persons except such as were or appeared to be seriously devoted to the service of their heavenly Father; nor was I accustomed to hear any other language than the language of religion. Whether I was naturally more grave than others of my own age, I cannot undertake to say; but certain it is, that my animal spirits were not excited either by the society of other children, by lively persons of more advanced age, or by the usual pastimes and sports of youth; from all of which I was for the most part very watchfully restrained.

“My mother’s house stood in a close narrow street in the town of Leeds. It was large, but very old; it was wide, but low; and although few of the apartments were ever occupied, they were all furnished and kept

with scrupulous neatness. In these wide and ancient apartments, in which were no ornaments or furniture but what might have suited the days of our Queen Elizabeth, and through which, with the exception of the parlour, moved no human being but my mother, Mrs. Hannah Wingfield, and the two female servants before mentioned—all of whom were always dressed with the most formal exactness and precision—I spent all the days of early infancy, experiencing no change of scene, except on those occasions when I was made to attend divine service in a small chapel in the neighbourhood, or when, which not unfrequently happened, my mother's friends met to read and pray in her large parlour.

“My occupations, during childhood, chiefly consisted in needlework, reading, and psalmody: while my only recreations were such as sometimes sitting on a dresser in the kitchen, sometimes looking out of a large casement window into the crowded and busy street, and sometimes examining the prints in a large Bible or Book of Martyrs.

“It may be asked by those who have been used to strong excitements from infancy, whether my life was not an exceedingly dull and miserable one. I answer, no; till my seventh or eighth year it was neither miserable nor dull; nor was I by any means uncomfortable, till, by the injudicious mode of treatment from those around me, certain selfish feelings were excited within my breast which had hitherto remained apparently inactive. Children are imitative creatures, and it was natural for me to imitate that which I constantly saw before me, or which I heard mentioned with approbation. It is very desirable that children should see nothing but what is right, and that they should be taught to imitate such things only as are laudable and becoming. But much care should be taken not to give them too great credit for that which is the effect of imitation only; neither to suppose that what is merely the result of endeavouring to do what they have observed in others, forms a necessary part of their real character. A child in a religious family, when not exposed to temptations from without, will imitate with accuracy all the forms of religion which it sees practised, and will assume without difficulty its language and manner. A judicious parent,

however, will be anxious to explain to such a child that all this may be done without one single spark of divine grace, and will strive to make him understand that the same imitative spirit would lead him to acquire the ways and language of the world with as much facility as he has acquired those of the Christian Church. Had those who were about me laboured to open my mind in this way to my real state, they had perhaps succeeded in saving me many hours of anguish, through which it became needful for me afterwards to pass in order to bring me to this knowledge.

“It perhaps matters not much, with respect to the harm it does, in what way the pride and vanity of youth are excited; and yet, I am inclined to think, that, if there be one way worse than another, of inflating the youthful mind with high notions of self, it is when vain thoughts are excited upon a religious account—so that if any one sort of pride ought to be dreaded more than another, it is spiritual pride; and for this reason, because that which must be applied for the remedy of every other species of vanity, (namely, religion,) cannot so easily be employed in a case, where by habitual mismanagement it has already served to promote the evil complained of. And thus that Gospel, which is a savour of life unto life to sinners of most denominations, becomes a savour of death unto death unto the individual who is spiritually proud. But more of this hereafter.

“I was allowed, when about six years of age, to taste a little variety, and to acquire some few new ideas which had a more lasting and important effect on my life than might have been at first imagined. I was taken by my mother to visit my grandfather, who resided in that corner of Staffordshire before alluded to. I had hitherto seen nothing of country life, and was consequently a total stranger to the various charms of rural scenery. I had seldom seen flowers but in a bow-pot, or trees but in the small smoky gardens which I had visited in the town. Sheep and lambs, cattle and the feathered tribes, I had never beheld but in the market-place; while of all the charming varieties of hill and dale, gushing brooks, wild woods and forests, verdant meadows and thymy uplands, I had as little conception as of the glories of the upper world. Great, therefore, was my delight when I found

myself emancipated from the dusty environs of my native town, and perceived that my view was bounded only by trees and hills, and by fields extending beyond fields, where animals of several descriptions were feeding in green pastures, or reposing by brooks of water.

“My grandfather’s house was an irregular old building, bordering on a small common covered with purple heath, on which a few sheep and many geese found a scanty provision, but which suggested to my young imagination the idea of immeasurable extent and boundless liberty: for here I was allowed to range at pleasure, and here I first acquired a relish for pure air and rural sounds.

“The back of the farm-house, which was towards the common, was covered with ivy which had climbed nearly to the roof, and from amid whose dark green and shining foliage peeped a few small casement windows, arranged without order, as best suited the convenience of the little nooks and closet-like apartments within. On one side of the farm-house was the highroad, and on the other a farm-yard and duck-pond; and in the front there was a trim garden encircled by a quick hedge, the garden being furnished with certain trees curiously trimmed and tortured so as to represent various monstrous figures of peacocks, pyramids, and lozenges. I say nothing of the quincunxes and heartshaped beds of tulips, pinks, carnations, and ranunculuses, which were my grandmother’s pride; nor of the espaliers which were equally the boast of my grandfather: but passing by these, I proceed to speak of the mode of life adopted in this family; which differing greatly from any thing to be seen in the present day, may perhaps afford some little amusement to such persons as hereafter may favour this narrative with a perusal. And here I cannot but observe, that many stories, in themselves infinitely more interesting than any thing I have to relate, lose much of their interest from the failure of descriptive powers in the historian. For since narrative is nothing else than a moving picture, if the figures are presented to the eye without their proper costume, and the foregrounds and backgrounds of the piece be wanting, the performance must needs lose much of its power to charm, while the uninstructed reader is perhaps led to supply circumstances

utterly contradictory to the real situations of the characters exhibited.

“My grandfather and grandmother, though in affluent circumstances, lived always in a large yet neat kitchen, their superiority to their domestics being only observable by their situations at the head of their hospitable board, with the patchwork cushions and elbows which marked their chairs. My grandmother, when I recollect her, was old and shrivelled, but had lost none of her activity, as was evident by the strength and piercing shrillness of her voice, together with the bustle which she made at four o'clock every morning upon calling up her maidens to milk.

“The family meals were always taken in the kitchen, and at such hours as are now grown unfashionable even in our cottages. Their dinner was always ready at twelve o'clock, and their supper at seven. The old people were however exceedingly hospitable, even in the best acceptation of the term, as no poor person ever went unsatisfied from their door.

“My grandfather and grandmother had never more than two sons, of which my father was the younger. The elder was settled in business in the neighbouring town, where having married he had now several daughters, who not seldom came over to the farm to pay their duty to their grandmother and to play with me, although they were by no means suited to my taste, having been brought up in a common boarding-school, and in consequence having acquired that sort of information and those habits which I could neither understand nor was in a situation to participate. In the mean time, I greatly enjoyed the kind of life which I passed at my grandfather's, and especially the liberty which was permitted me of exploring all odd corners in and about the farmhouse. And I remember that I always enjoyed these amusements most when my cousins were not with me, their manners, as I before said, differing widely from mine.

“Immediately on the other side of the highroad, opposite my grandfather's house, was a small green, near to which stood a large house, which even in those days looked old. It was encircled by a walled garden, over which I could only distinguish the higher windows, the

sloping roof, and upper parts of the gable ends. In this house dwelt a widow lady, whose history was little known; but from the extreme retirement in which she lived, and the seriousness if not solemnity of her manner when she paid her annual afternoon visit to my grandmother, it was supposed that she had known better days and seen many sorrows. This lady had one son, a little older than myself, whom I shall call Theophilus; this being the only name by which I knew him for many years. This widow lady's family had formerly consisted of several children, as appeared from a family picture placed over the high mantelpiece in her old-fashioned parlour, in which a number of fine children were grouped together around a lamb, whose white fleece they were decorating with flowers. I know not the merit of this picture, but I remember that the colours were bright when I saw it, that the little figures represented therein were fair and ruddy, with lips of coral and eyes of heavenly blue, and that the baby, who was no other than Theophilus, had ringlets of very fair hair, shading, though not concealing, his beautiful features.

"As the lady never spoke of the children she had lost, or of the husband from whom she had been separated by death, no one could form an idea of the nature of that storm by which her earthly happiness had been rudely assailed, and so little left her of all she had held dear in the world. Nevertheless, it appeared that she had borne her trials as a Christian, and, though cast down, was not yet without those hopes of which infidelity only can deprive us.

"It may be supposed, that in such circumstances as I have described, Theophilus was the darling of his tender mother; and there was no room to doubt that he had been brought up with the utmost care, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and that her pious instructions had been attended with a peculiar blessing: for this child, even at that tender age in which I first became acquainted with him, afforded a rare example of early piety, discovering that purity and simplicity, which can be attributed only to the work of the Holy Spirit.

"I had several times, while playing in my grandfather's garden, observed little Theophilus sitting in a projecting window of his mother's house, and had conceived

an earnest desire of becoming acquainted with him some time before an opportunity served for this purpose, as he was seldom allowed to play beyond the garden-wall. But one morning, as I was pursuing the young lambs on the common before mentioned, I met the little boy returning from a cottage on the other side of the little heath, with an empty basket on his arm; and as he drew near to me I stopped and stood quite still till he came up.

“ ‘Do not frighten the lambs, little girl,’ said he to me; ‘pray do not. My mother has told me that it hurts them to be driven about.’

“ ‘I will not do it again, then,’ I answered; ‘but I did not know it could hurt them.’

“ ‘Stop one minute,’ said the little boy, putting down his basket and feeling in his pocket, ‘I will give you a ball if I can find it, and then you may roll it before you and run after it.’ So saying, he began to unload his little pocket, producing a piece of entangled packthread, a knife, and a little book, but no ball. This last circumstance seemed to perplex him; and standing for a moment, as if to recollect himself, he at length said, ‘O! I know where it is; it is at home: stay one minute, and I will fetch it.’ So saying, he ran off like an arrow from a bow, leaving me in the middle of the common to keep guard over his treasures; which I did very faithfully, though I thought there could be no harm in my looking at the book: for which purpose I sat down upon the ground, and putting the packthread and the other precious articles in my lap, I began to examine the little gilt volume with such attention that I did not remark the return of Theophilus, who was by my side with his ball before I was by any means aware of it.

“ Remote as the period is when I first formed an acquaintance with this excellent child, with the eye of my mind I still behold his figure as he stood before me at the moment he presented me with the ball: the exercise he had taken had given a fine glow to his cheeks, and his dark blue eyes sparkled with innocent joy. ‘There, little girl,’ he said, ‘I have found the ball, and my mother says I may give it to you; and I hope you will keep it: I made it myself. And that little book is a very pretty one: I will lend it you if you would like to read it.’

“ ‘But there is no reading in it,’ I replied, as I turned the leaves over.

“ ‘O! I forgot that!’ returned Theophilus. ‘But though there is no reading in it, there are beautiful stories belonging to all those pictures, and I will tell them to you, if you please, though I cannot do it so well as mamma does.’ So saying, he placed himself on the grass by me, and turning to the little pictures one by one, he made it appear that some Christian anecdote and some beautiful moral were attached to each little engraving. I cannot exactly remember any one of these little tales, yet I recollect the effect of the whole, and even to this day there is united in my mind, with the memory of this book, certain ideas of the Saviour’s love, of heavenly glory, and earthly peace, which never can be separated from it.

“When Theophilus had completed his innocent task, I remember that I made some remarks on what he had said, which were such, no doubt, as to give a stander-by rather a favourable impression of me, though spoken without intention, and as from one child to another. But these remarks were remembered by my little companion, and repeated to his mother. The consequence of which was, that I was the next day invited to drink tea with this lady, and from that period allowed to converse freely with the little boy as long as I remained at my grandfather’s, which was about half a year—a privilege which was highly valued by my grandmother, who frequently assured my mother that I was the only child in the neighbourhood who was ever permitted to play with Theophilus.

“I have but an indistinct recollection of the many happy hours spent during that interval with Theophilus and his widowed mother: I remember only that I loved them both, was very happy in their company, and that they made religion sweet to me, without inflating me with high ideas of my own spiritual attainments. I remember also, that the lady and her little son both shed tears when I was lifted into the carriage to return home; and that they seemed to stand weeping at the door of their garden till I could see them no longer.

“And now I recollect nothing more till I was again settled in the old house at Leeds, renewing my acquaint-

ance with Mrs. Hannah Wingfield, the two old servants, together with the antique beds, chairs, tables, and pictures, which had been before my eyes from the days of my earliest infancy.

“How long I retained any remains of the simplicity I had brought with me from Staffordshire, I know not; but this I recollect, that when I was about nine years of age I one day heard Mrs. Hannah Wingfield remark to my mother, that Jenetta had lately become very fond of her Bible, and that she was thence led to hope that a saving change was about to take place in me.

“Little as I understood what the old lady meant by a *saving change*, I was capable of comprehending by her manner of speaking, that it was something good, something desirable, something praiseworthy; and that it was connected with reading the Bible. I was also aware that my poor mother looked upon me with delight on hearing this remark: and I heard her reply, ‘I wish it may be so, Mrs. Hannah; Jenetta is young to be sure, but we have heard of such changes taking place even at a more tender age; nay, that some have even been sanctified from the womb.’

“I took no more notice of this conversation than if I had never heard it, although not a syllable of it had been lost; but, in consequence of it, I failed not to be often seen with my Bible. And after a while, hearing my kind but injudicious friends speaking with rapture of that love of the Scriptures which I evidenced, I thought that I might as well endeavour to advance another step in their good opinion; accordingly I took frequent occasion to establish myself in my little chair, with a stool before me which served for a table, in the corner of the wide oldfashioned parlour which my friends occupied, where I busily employed myself with my Bible and hymn-book, singing, and praying, and reading aloud.

“Thus I accustomed myself to play the hypocrite; for I do not remember that I had the slightest feeling of religion during any of these seasons. Now a judicious conduct on the part of my friends at this time, would have proved the insincerity of my pretensions; and if they had not power to lead me on to better things, they might at least have induced me to look into myself, which was what I at that time chiefly needed. Had my friends

not noticed me at all on these occasions ; or had they spoken of these exercises as mere common duties exhibiting nothing particularly praiseworthy ; or had they pressed upon me the importance of serving God with the heart, and the necessity of seeking the divine assistance to enable me so to do ; they would then have done all that in them lay to render my formal service a service of the heart. But on the contrary, I found much in their manner when I used to be thus engaged, particularly calculated to excite my pride and vanity, and nothing which could at all indicate the smallest doubt of my sincerity ; in consequence of which, I raised my voice still louder, and lengthened out my prayers and hymns till I was often wearied of them myself.

“ A very little observation might have enabled my friends to discern that I was deceiving myself as well as them, by my seeming acts of devotion. They might have seen that all I did of this kind, particularly at first, was always in their presence ; and that I was never found alone at my prayers and devotions in the closet in which I slept within my mother’s bed-room, although that place was much more convenient for the purpose than the one I had chosen, and I was allowed to go into it whenever I pleased. By this criterion I might have been fairly judged in the early days of my Christian profession. But afterwards, as the delusion became stronger in my own mind, it led me to as exact a performance of the formal duties of my closet, as to those of a more public nature—thus exhibiting an alarming proof of the great lengths to which a formal professor may go in the work of deceiving himself and others, without even possessing a single spark of grace. But to return to my narrative.

“ After I had carried on this childish farce for some time, and had heard myself much and frequently praised by my poor mother and Mrs. Hannah, my religious progress was at length reported to the friends who visited my mother ; some of whom, no doubt in the simplicity of their hearts, failed not to congratulate me on having found the right way at so early an age : and at these seasons I heard my case compared with those of Timothy, Samuel, and other youthful saints.

“ Shortly after this period, I began to talk a little in

company, as well as with my mother and Mrs. Hannah Wingfield, on religious subjects ; when I was accustomed to make a few apt quotations from Scripture, which were speedily reported and retailed in my hearing. And on these occasions I have heard several mothers declare how much they envied Mrs. Mannering the possession of such a child ; adding, with all the warmth of Christian and parental feeling, that they would be glad to purchase for their children such spiritual blessings as I enjoyed, were it at the expence of half their fortunes. Now although these things were not addressed to me or meant for my hearing, I overheard too many of them ; and they acted as powerful stimulants in urging me to support the character which had procured me so much credit.

“ From this time till I was eighteen years of age, I wanted no motive which the world could hold out to induce me to preserve the distinction which I had obtained.

“ Before I was twelve years of age, I ceased to be treated as a child by my mother’s religious friends, who freely allowed me to make one in most of their religious parties. I acquired also much credit at this time by my knowledge of Scripture : with which knowledge my head was so well stored that I could often turn to a text when all the rest of the company were at a loss to find it : and how would the blood mount up to my cheeks with conscious pride on such occasions as these !

“ I was a neat needlewoman, and handy in cutting out and making garments ; insomuch that my assistance was often solicited by those who had clothing to make for the needy. By these means I continually grew in the good opinion of the excellent people with whom I associated ; and if others were deceived in me, it cannot be wondered at if my mother was equally deluded, since it is well known how much the heart of a mother is naturally inclined to think the best of her child. In the mean while, I was fully persuaded in my own mind that my character was a decided one : and as nothing occurred in the way of temptation to awaken me from this dream, I became every day more and more confirmed in the persuasion, that I was one of the excellent of the earth ; while at this very time every original corrup-

tion of my heart was in full, perfect, and undisturbed power. But to leave these reflections.

“At the age of seventeen I was advanced to be teacher, first of a child’s school, and soon afterwards of an adult school, which I attended at stated hours in the week. In this situation I was called upon to give advice, to censure and commend, to catechise and pray; all of which duties I performed with so much prudence as to obtain still further testimonies of the approbation and esteem of the society. I now presented myself as a candidate for the communion; and being required to make confession of my faith, state of mind, and sense of sin, with other matters of importance, I gave such an account of myself as afforded much satisfaction to my friends. Mr. Barret, the minister, indeed, pressed me particularly, I remember, upon the subject of conviction of sin, and in such a manner, I have since thought, as discovered that he had some doubts of my humility: but my self-delusion was quite sufficient to carry me through this examination with comfort to myself; so that I gave him such an account of my experiences of this nature, the strong convictions I had felt, the horrible views I entertained of my own heart, the deep sense I had of my own utter helplessness and the need in which I stood of a Saviour, that he finally expressed himself satisfied, and I presented myself the next sabbath-day at the altar, under the supposition of my being one of the most contrite creatures present.

“Should it be here enquired, whether I meant to speak untruths on being thus solemnly questioned by the minister? or if it be asked, how I could presume to confess what I never had felt, making a false avowal in the sight of God? I answer, that, if I deceived the minister, I was also myself deceived. I had learned the language of religion, and could run off fine periods on every subject connected with it, though an utter stranger to all truly pious feelings: I did not know what conviction of sin was, though I knew the manner in which religious persons were accustomed to talk of it: I had not even felt the need of a Saviour, though I fancied that I loved and depended upon Christ. In short, I was acting a part, and I did it so well as to lose myself in the character I assumed. And such is the extreme deceit-

fulness of the human heart, that I fear many fair professors are now living in a state of the same self-deception as that which I then practised with so much effect.

“Soon after I had become a communicant, several events took place in our society of a very awakening and alarming nature. Among these was the sudden and very disgraceful fall of a person whom I had always been in the habit of considering as an advanced Christian. There were many circumstances in the case which I might have taken to myself, and which I ought to have looked upon as an awful and appropriate warning: but such was the self-confidence in which I then lived, that instead of humbling myself on this occasion, I rather felt inclined to say with the Pharisee, *I thank thee, O God, that I am not as others.*

“I have, since it has pleased God to open my eyes, endeavoured to form an accurate idea of the state of my mind and feelings, while engaged in this system of deception. But I find it impossible distinctly to recollect any other impression except that of the most perfect self-approbation, which knew no interval of sound awakenings. And here let me pause once again, to warn the directors of youth concerning the danger, the extreme danger, of marring the work of Christian instruction, by administering cordials to a mind as yet unhumiliated by sin, and teaching young professors to build upon real or supposed gifts, where the evidences of grace are entirely wanting. But to continue my story.

“While proceeding thus triumphantly in the way of death, at the very time when I believed myself to be far advanced in the way of salvation, I was surprised one Sunday at our place of worship, by seeing a young minister of a remarkably fine appearance ascend the pulpit. There was something in his countenance which struck me as being perfectly familiar to me; but he had almost finished his discourse before I recognized Theophilus. I shall say no more of the manner and doctrine of this young man, than that both appeared to me such as might be expected from one who was divinely taught. The subject of his discourse was the conversion of the heathen, and the obligation under which those lie who are already blessed with divine light, of exerting themselves in bringing the nations who sit in darkness to

the knowledge of this light. On mixing with the crowd in coming out of the chapel, I heard the name of the preacher mentioned, with this additional information respecting him—that he had only lately been appointed to the ministry, and was going abroad as a missionary in a very few weeks. This last information touched me more than I can describe; and I hastened home to yield in secret to feelings for which I could scarcely account.

“I saw no more of Theophilus till the next day, when he unexpectedly called upon me, and in a manner the most tender and affectionate addressed me as an old and dear friend, of whom he had ever retained the fondest recollection.

“Theophilus remained in Leeds some weeks, during which time, as we often met, our early attachment had not only recovered its former warmth, but acquired so much strength that I was by no means surprised at what passed when this amiable young man came to take his final leave of me previous to his going abroad. I do not however pretend to give the whole of this discourse as it actually took place; suffice it to say, that after having spoken with pleasure of the account he had heard of me from our minister, Mr. Barret, and other Christian friends, he expressed a hope, though now going abroad where he was likely to remain absent for some years, that he might see me again, and that our friendship formed in childhood might at some future time be renewed and matured. And this he spoke with so much feeling and emphasis, that it would have been impossible for me to have interpreted it in any other way than I had afterwards reason to believe it was intended.

“Theophilus further informed me, that ever since the death of his tender mother he had felt a strong inclination to devote his life to the service of the heathen. Nevertheless, that he hoped to return to England for a short time, after having formed his establishment abroad.

“Theophilus left Leeds that very evening: but before he departed he gave me a beautiful Bible, together with a small volume of hymns selected by himself and written with his own hand. After his departure, it appeared to me that I should never cease to love Theophilus, and herein I was not mistaken; but I was deceived in sup-

posing that there was no sacrifice which I could not make for his sake.

“For four months after hearing of his actual embarkation, things went on with me in their usual course; but at the end of that period I was deprived of my tender and indulgent mother by a sudden death. In consequence of this event, our household was broken up, Mrs. Hannah Wingfield removed to another place, and I was consigned to the care of my uncle in Staffordshire, my grandfather and grandmother being dead. I shall not trouble my reader with a description of my feelings during these changes in my situation; indeed I should be somewhat at a loss to describe them, not perfectly comprehending them myself; on which account I proceed to the precise moment when dressed in deep but simple mourning I was set down at the door of my uncle’s house, in —.

“During the interval of my absence from Staffordshire, which was more than ten years, my grandfather, as before intimated, had died; on which occasion my uncle obtained such an accumulation of property, that he had given up his shop, hired a handsome house, set up his carriage, and now made a splendid figure in the little town where he had once acted the subordinate part of a retail dealer in linen drapery. Of this change in the appearance and habits of the family I was not aware; I was therefore surprised when a very smart footman opened the door and led me through a handsome hall, illuminated by a superb lamp, into an elegant apartment, where my aunt and uncle, and five cousins, were at tea. I have reason to think that neither my cousins nor myself could at that time exhibit an example of elegant manners; but there was this difference between me and them—that I was plain in my appearance, and, with respect to external things at least, of no pretensions; while my cousins were pretenders to fashion, as well as to that most tasteless and disgusting style of manners which for some years past has obtained the name of *dashing*; by which term is generally understood all that is ungracious, ungenteel, and repulsive. In the mean time, the family were extremely illiterate, having scarcely obtained that degree of knowledge which could enable them to speak with any tolerable gramma-

tical accuracy. The same error was strikingly manifest in the worldly education of my cousins, which had taken place in my religious noviciate; that is, as I had been taught to talk religion without possessing the piety of a true Christian, so they had been led to affect the manners and feelings of the person of fashion, without making such acquirements as are necessary to the character. But enough of this.

“On my entering the parlour, the family group which presented itself to my eye was arranged in the following order—my aunt, a respectable, comely, well-dressed old lady, was sitting at the tea-table, and seemed to be wholly absorbed in its various duties; two of my female cousins, whom I shall have the pleasure of introducing to you by the names of Miss Dolly and Miss Esther, were lounging with affected ease on a sofa, their brother Frank being seated between them; my uncle, who, as well as his wife, was a pleasing and respectable looking person, sat in an arm-chair by the fire; before which stood my cousin Geoffry, holding forth and arguing with his father in a manner so loud and dictatorial, that I even heard his voice before the door was opened; while in the centre of the room stood my cousin Bessy, who was about my own age, playing with a cup-and-ball, with all the glee of a child of ten years old, paying no attention whatever to the various humours of those about her, but calling on each by turns to admire her dexterity, and holding up the plaything with a broad smile, which displayed all her teeth and almost amounted to a grin, whenever by good luck she chanced to catch the ball upon the spike. The door having been quietly opened, I advanced some steps into the room, and had even stood looking round me for a few seconds, before I was observed. The footman then announcing my name, the whole family at once came running to meet me, kissing me by turns, and then retreating to examine me from head to foot; while the old people alone recollected to welcome me to their house, my uncle very kindly saying, that he hoped I should be happy under his roof.

“After the first salutations were past, my aunt called us to the tea-table, where I sat down, oppressed by the novelty of my situation; by a painful sense of the losses I had recently sustained; and, above all, by the unce-

remonious gaze of all my cousins, who seemed anxious to scan every feature, and to criticise every motion.

"After a pause, which was filled by tea-table preparations, my cousin Frank exclaimed, 'I cannot, for the life of me, think who Jenetta is like.'

"'Like!' said my uncle, 'who can tell what she is like, in that Methodist bonnet? Do, child, pull it off. I vow it makes you look like your grandmother.'

"A burst of laughter ensued upon this from my female cousins; and Bessy, jumping up in a romping style, lifted my bonnet from my head, with a motion resembling what one would use in taking off the lid of a boiling saucepan, and then very dexterously threw it over the table upon the couch.

"'Well done, girl!' said the father; 'thus away with these Methodist topknots.'

"'Well done, Bessy!' said Frank: 'but if you would send the cap after the bonnet, your work would be more complete.'

"Bessy immediately arose again, and would have torn my cap from my head and made it follow the bonnet, if I had not held it on with both my hands.

"'Come, come, child,' said my aunt, addressing her youngest daughter, 'let the girl alone; she does very well.'

"'Very well?' said Dolly, 'very well, in that horrid cap?'

"'Ay, sister Dolly,' said Geoffry, who had not yet spoken since we sat down, 'I'll tell you a piece of my mind, she looks better in that plain cap than you do in all your finery.'

"'What a taste you must have, brother!' said Esther.

"'I don't mean to say that I like the cap,' he answered, 'for indeed I do not: but the face is certainly one that no cap can spoil.'

"The young ladies made no answer to this remark, but the old gentleman said, 'True, boy, true: the face is a good one; and fresh and fair as the face of a milk-maid.'

"My female cousins looked mortified at this; but I inwardly enjoyed their displeasure; a circumstance which, had I known how to judge myself, might have proved to me that I was by no means so far advanced in a religious course as I had vainly imagined.

“The conversation, if such unconnected exclamations as I have repeated may be called conversation, then took another course; when I heard many subjects discussed of a nature totally different from any that I had been before acquainted with, but which failed not even then to excite my curiosity. The chief topics alluded to, were the public assemblies; the characters and talents of a company of stage-players then in the town; the number of beaus mustered at the last ball; the equipages kept in the town; the beauties of the young ladies; and the airs which certain great families gave themselves when they met in public with those whom they did not consider as equally great with themselves.

“During this conversation, my uncle sat like one lost in thought; but all the other individuals of the family expressed their opinions with more or less heat and animation, as circumstances seemed to call them out.

“When the tea-things were removed, my uncle and his two sons withdrew, and my female cousins brought out their work-boxes, while my aunt set herself in a most indefatigable manner to question me upon my former modes of life and habits; at the same time drawing up her mouth, and making no other observation on my communications than by certain emphatic hums and nods, and now and then uttering the words, ‘indeed,’ ‘surely,’ ‘extraordinary,’ ‘surprising.’ My cousins were not however quite so cautious as their mother, for they now and then exclaimed with unfeigned amazement: till at length, looking at each other, they broke into so loud a burst of laughter, as to leave it no longer a matter of doubt in my mind whether they were actually *quizzing me* and every thing I said without mercy. Being offended at this, I would answer no more questions, but complaining of fatigue, asked permission to go to bed.

“When alone, I began to weep bitterly, and to think of my mother and Theophilus. I then took the little hymn-book, which the latter had given me, from my pocket, and sung a favourite hymn in a very low voice, being often interrupted by sobs. At length, the idea occurred to me that I was brought into a situation in which my divine vocation was to be tried; and on this idea, I built a kind of romance, in which I fancied myself to be acting a very conspicuous part, enduring with firm-

ness a long and bitter persecution, through which I was enabled to pass with such a calm and heroic dignity as astonished my persecutors, and which was continued till the return of Theophilus, from whom, and from my own applauding conscience, I was to receive my earthly reward, while from the favour of God, I was to expect a heavenly and eternal one. My thoughts were still engaged in these romantic views, when I fell asleep.

“ I slept long, and when I awoke found the sun shining in at my window. I arose in haste ; but before I had finished dressing myself, Bessy entered my room, and telling me that all the family were waiting for me, I hastened down, ashamed to tell her that I had not yet performed my usual devotions.

“ Were I to tell you what passed at breakfast, it would be but as it were a kind of change rung upon the same notes.

“ My eldest female cousin had I found already arrived at that time of life when youth and beauty are on the wane ; and although she had met with nothing but disappointments, she clung to the world with a pertinacity which any one would think impossible, if examples of the same species of folly were not frequently displayed before every eye. She was, however, irritated by her disappointments, and was in consequence sour and captious. The second sister, Esther, was however still in her bloom ; and being counted handsome and fashionable, she was in the habit of receiving just as much encouragement from the world as kept up her self-consequence. Bessy was still almost a child ; in mind she was especially so ; and being the youngest of the family, she was treated as such ; her character however had nothing in it of artless simplicity, but was rather that of a spoiled favourite, and a romp. The brothers were what, in modern times, we should call Dandies, or Corinthians ; but how such persons were denominated twenty years or more ago, I cannot recollect. This, however, I must observe ; that whereas my cousin Frank was a lively, dashing young man, saying every thing that came uppermost, and absolutely without modesty, Geoffry was grave, solemn, and proud, and seemed to think that he conferred a favour on every lady to whom he spoke. I presently discovered that there was a perpetual war of

words, and probably of interests, between the two elder sisters and the brothers, while Bessy seemed to be too thoughtless to take either side. But to delineate these characters no further—

“As soon as breakfast was finished and the gentlemen withdrawn, a regular attack was made upon my style of dress by my aunt and cousins, who declared that it was absolutely necessary that I should be new modelled. My cousins ridiculed my present mode with so little mercy that I began to shed tears: whereupon my aunt took up the matter seriously, and delivered her opinion much to the following purport.—

“‘Come, come, Jenetta, my dear,’ said the old lady, ‘you must allow me to speak my mind to you; you know that I cannot possibly have any motive for meddling in these matters but for your good. Now, as I have told my daughters a thousand times, I am very fond of religion and those kind of things, and never miss church once in the Sunday, when the weather will permit; yet I cannot think it right that any young person should appear different to the rest of the world; for you know, Jenetta, if we are not like other people, we must be particular, and on that very account become objects of ridicule among all genteel people.’

“I answered, that I had been taught to look upon conformity to the world as a sinful thing; and I brought forward several texts in corroboration of my principle.

“On this, the young ladies laughed. But they were suddenly checked by their mother, who said, ‘We are now talking seriously, girls; and I desire that you will refrain from your idle jests; for I am sure your cousin will be much more likely to be convinced by my arguments than by your foolish titterings.’ Then turning again to me, she granted all I said to be true, and that it certainly was wrong to conform to the world in forbidden things; but that it was right so to do in things which are innocent, such as the cut of a gown or cap, and in all such trivial matters. She concluded by observing that, as she believed I was a girl of sense, she was persuaded that I should soon submit my will to hers in this particular.

“I replied, with some pertness, as I since recollect, that we must first agree on what were and what were not

innocent compliances. And hereupon I proceeded to a further explanation of my sentiments and opinions with respect to these matters; bringing forward many doctrines of religion and many texts of Scripture, which were as entirely beyond the comprehension of my auditors as so many passages quoted from the Hebrew Bible.

"On my ceasing to speak, after pausing a moment my aunt thus replied: 'And so I suppose that you conceive no one can be saved who does not think precisely as you do?'

"'I do not pretend to judge others,' I very properly answered; 'but I am persuaded that if I do not myself endeavour to act according to my belief, I shall be lost.'

"'Good heavens!' said my aunt, lifting up her hands and eyes; 'what notions are these for a girl of eighteen!'

"I was offended at her manner, and replied, 'Though I am here considered as a child in these matters, it was not so at Leeds. I was there at the head of a class; I was employed as a teacher; and was supposed to understand the principles and doctrines of our blessed religion as well as many older persons.'

"'Well! well!' said my aunt, exclaiming again, 'who would have thought that things would ever have come to this pass? a child like you to be considered as a spiritual teacher! Niece, niece, take my advice, and get these whims out of your head as fast as you can; and for heaven's sake don't talk of such matters here.'

"I burst into tears, and replied, 'What! get my religion out of my head as soon as I can, aunt? And do you seriously offer me this advice?'

"'Not your religion, child,' she answered; 'it is not your religion I want you to get rid of; but your stiff methodistical manner, and your formal way of talking about the great progress you have made in these grave concerns.' Here the old lady stopped to take breath, and then proceeded.—'Excuse the harsh terms I use, for they came out unawares to myself. I don't know so much of religion as I should do, it is true; but I think I know enough of it to say that yours is not of the right sort.'

"My aunt was certainly so far right: my religion was not indeed of the right sort. I do not mean with regard to doctrines, for those which I had been taught were

undoubtedly agreeable to Scripture : but the seat of my religion was not the right one ; it lay all in my head, and had not yet touched my heart. I was however much offended by this rebuke ; my pride was roused, and I remained silent.

“ My cousins continued to laugh heartily, and my aunt walked out of the room with an air of pique. The door was scarcely closed upon the old lady, when the young ones renewed the attack. Bessy began this fresh assault, by saying, ‘ And so, cousin, you were the leader of a class ? and yet you are actually two months my junior. I’ll tell you what, Dolly and Esther, I will have a class ; and I will teach, and preach, and pray. Why should I not ? ’

“ ‘ Why should you not ? ’ replied Esther ; ‘ I dare say, if it served your turn, you could draw up your mouth, and look as sanctified as any of them. ’

“ Much more was said to the same purpose, but I remained silent for a considerable time, till at length, becoming excessively angry, I uttered some expressions of a nature so bitter and contemptuous, that my two elder cousins were surprised into silence, and the giddy Bessy, getting up and coming close to me, tapped me on the back, exclaiming, ‘ Well done, Jenetta ! well done, cousin ! So much for Christian meekness ! ’

“ And here I must pause a moment, to remark that my situation at that time was a very difficult one. Nevertheless, had I possessed that Christian meekness, with respect to which even my giddy cousin had perceived my deficiency, these difficulties would at first have been infinitely less, and would probably have entirely disappeared after a while. It was in fact, I am well persuaded, not my religion, but my want of religion, which at that time rendered the opposition I experienced, and the trials I encountered in my uncle’s family, so very painful.

“ Before I had time to answer my cousin Bessy, a violent rap was heard at the street-door ; and instantly afterwards my cousin Frank walked into the room, accompanied by a young man, in whose appearance there was nothing remarkable, excepting that the lower part of his face was entirely lost in an enormous cravat, and that the upper part seemed to be almost entirely occupied by an immense pair of eyes, of which nothing more

could be said, but that they were eyes having as little expression of any kind as any pair of eyes in a human head could be supposed to possess.

“At sight of this last personage, the young ladies sprang up as if they had that moment received an electrical shock, exclaiming with one voice, ‘O! Sir Timothy! who would have thought of seeing you here? we believed you were in town.’

“‘And so I was last night at ten o’clock,’ he answered; ‘but here I am, as you see, now, at your service, ladies.’

“‘And in fine preservation too,’ said Frank, ‘though in danger of being lost.’

“‘Lost!’ said the young man, ‘lost! how so, Frank?’

“‘Why lost in the folds of this monstrous neckcloth,’ returned the other, stroking his hand over the cravat.

“‘There now, upon honour, can’t be quiet, Frank,’ returned Sir Timothy, pulling up his neckcloth. ‘But, ladies, we are come to propose a frolic: have you heard that —, the great comic actor from the London theatre, is to exhibit in our town to night? What say you about going to see him?’

“‘Say?’ said Bessy, ‘why I say that I should like it of all things.’

“‘But don’t you know that we have not yet been out since my poor aunt’s death?’ remarked my cousin Dolly; ‘and it might be thought improper to make our first appearance in the theatre.’

“‘O!’ said Sir Timothy, ‘I don’t want you to make your appearance, I want to go incognito, to mob it, you know, to go in masquerade, and sit in the gallery. Eh, Frank? Nobody will think of looking for us there. Borrow the maids’ bonnets, and I will wear my servant’s hat and great coat.’

“‘But what masquerade am I to wear?’ said Frank.

“‘O, go in your own character,’ said Sir Timothy; ‘you won’t disgrace the gallery: no one will take you for a gentleman when not in gentlemen’s company. Eh, Frank, eh?’

“‘I shall shoot you, Sir Timothy, as sure as you say that again,’ said Frank, laughing.

“‘A fine thought,’ remarked Bessy, ‘a fine thought has just occurred to me: I’ll borrow my cousin’s Methodist bonnet. Jenetta, will you lend it to me?’

“By thus addressing me she drew upon me the eyes of Sir Timothy, who, coming near to me, begged to be introduced, and then said, ‘I trust, fair lady, that you will not lend your bonnet to any one, but rather make use of it yourself, and honour our party with your presence.’

“‘No, Sir,’ I answered, with cold reserve; ‘I never go to plays.’

“‘Don’t you?’ said the baronet, fixing his large eyes upon me; ‘and why not?’

“‘O, Sir Timothy,’ said Bessy, ‘she would not go to such wicked places for the world: she is a Methodist.’

“Sir Timothy turned on his heel, whistled a tune, and said in a loud whisper to Frank, ‘If all Methodists were like the one before me I should be inclined to be one too.’

“I cannot describe to you what pain I feel in repeating this light and frothy conversation, but I have compelled myself to give it you at some length, in order to lay before you, in its true light, the weakness of that heart which is not upheld by divine strength, and to shew you how little dependence can be placed on those who walk in their own strength, and are not divinely upheld. ‘O, Theophilus! how was it possible for one who had known and loved Theophilus to be drawn aside by such characters as I have just described?’

“The mobbing-party for the theatre was determined upon and carried into effect; but I found little difficulty in excusing myself, the recent death of my mother being thought a sufficient apology even by these worldly people.

“This same evening, after the younger ones were gone, while I sat at tea with my uncle and aunt, my cousin Geoffry came in, and sat down with us. His mother expressed some surprise at seeing him, saying, that she supposed him to have been at the theatre.

“‘No,’ said the young man haughtily; ‘I certainly shall not give my countenance to such doings.’

“‘And why, son?’ said my uncle; ‘are not the girls in good company?’

“‘They are with those who are ashamed of them in higher society,’ replied my cousin. ‘Sir Timothy is willing to make our house his inn when he comes to town, and to amuse himself privately in my sisters’ company; but have they not had experience enough to

prove to them, that this their fine friend will not even be seen to speak to them in public?’

“ ‘There is much truth in what you say,’ replied my aunt.

“ ‘Well then,’ said Geoffry, ‘I am amazed that you do not put a check upon schemes of such a nature as have been allowed to take place this evening.’

“ ‘You know, son,’ replied the mother, ‘that your sisters are not to be persuaded on matters of this kind by me. I would have prevailed on them to remain at home this evening; but as they did not choose to listen to my counsel, I should have taken it well if you had accompanied them, for the purpose of affording them your protection.’

“ ‘I persist,’ said the young man, ‘in declaring that I will have nothing to do with this business.’

“The mother replied, that she took this conduct of her son’s very ill, on which the young man grew sullen and walked off; and being soon followed by his father, I was left alone with my aunt, who amused me, during the rest of the evening, with long histories of the little cabals and suspected intrigues of the town—inveighing violently against a certain Miss Hawkins, the granddaughter of an earl, who was reckoned the most accomplished belle in the place, and was singled out by the world for the future wife of Sir Timothy.

“When my aunt first began upon these matters, I remember feeling such an extreme degree of listlessness as hardly to refrain from yawning; but, insensibly, as she proceeded, I found my interest excited, and caught myself several times saying, ‘Well, and how was this affair concluded?’—‘And how did that matter terminate?’ The result, however, of my aunt’s communications was shortly this: that Miss Hawkins and my cousin Esther were supposed to be rivals in Sir Timothy’s regard; that he really preferred the latter, but was ashamed of her family, and therefore paid his respects to the one in public and the other in private.

“My mind was so full of these things, which were all perfectly new, strange, and incomprehensible to me, that when I retired to my own apartment, which I did before the return of the party from the theatre, I found myself utterly incapable of attending to my customary religious

duties. I opened my Bible, indeed, and held it before my eyes, but not a single idea was communicated to my mind from the sacred volume; and I went to sleep, thinking how I would treat Sir Timothy were I in the situation of my cousin Esther.

“It may seem remarkable that I should recollect all these things with so much accuracy. But I have been in the habit for many years of making daily memorandums, or keeping a kind of journal; and although the memorandums I made at that period of my history to which I now allude are written in a spirit very different from that which at present actuates me, yet they serve as exceedingly powerful helps to my memory. But enough of this for the present.

“I will therefore now proceed to point out what appears to me perfectly evident—that, notwithstanding my late loud professions, and the mode of life which I had led from my youth up—notwithstanding my prayers, my knowledge of Scripture, my serious observances, and my pretended love of the brethren in Christ—religion had as yet taken no hold whatever of my heart. It is written, *Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.* (Heb. xi. 1.) In this faith the child of God passes through present things as if they were not, and being secretly supplied by the bread of heaven and the water of life, he is enabled to sustain the parching heats of the wilderness of this world, running without weariness, and walking without fainting. So far, however, from being at that time advanced in the walk of faith, as I then supposed myself to be, I had not taken the first steps in that sacred path. I had, it is true, much head knowledge; but the Word of God had not yet been made effectual by the application of the Holy Spirit, to teach me even the true nature of the divine law. I had not yet been brought to feel myself a fallen creature—though I could expatiate with no small volubility on the doctrine of man’s depravity, and even of my own particular corruptions, frequently calling myself the chief of sinners. And as to a renewal of heart, I had never experienced any such thing, although I descanted continually upon the need of it, and did not scruple to speak of myself as of one who had undergone this blessed change, fancying I almost knew the hour and the moment

when it had taken place; and, without fear or doubt, speaking of such and such feelings, and such and such events, as having taken place before or after my conversion.

“ Having therefore not as yet been brought within the threshold of a regenerate state, it could not be expected that I should find the benefits of that state, which to the believer are two-fold: first, it places him in a condition of safety, consisting in a deliverance by the Saviour from every evil and danger, both in time and eternity, to which sin had justly exposed him; and, secondly, it affords an abundant supply of all spiritual blessings, freely given to him in the Redeemer, and received as they are wanted by the hand of faith out of the fulness of Christ. Whosoever therefore has obtained this precious faith, possesses with it a quiet conscience at peace with God, and is thereby enabled at all times to come boldly to the throne of grace, for the purpose of receiving help and assistance to uphold and quicken him in his heavenly course.

“ I was undoubtedly at the time I speak of in a situation not favourable, humanly speaking, to the attainment of the state of mind above described: but supposing that I had already possessed it, my difficulties were not such as would have interfered greatly with my advancement; since I found, after the first eight-and-forty hours at my uncle's, that my relations seemed very much inclined to leave me to myself.

“ My uncle, though a coarse man, was not an ill-natured one. My cousin Geoffry was, I found, disgusted with his sisters' forwardness, and particularly offended at their intimacy with Sir Timothy; insomuch that he was heard to say that he infinitely preferred his cousin Jenetta's Methodistical reserve to their vulgar dash. My female cousins had reasons of their own, which may be hereafter discovered, for acquiescing very quietly in keeping me in the background. My aunt was very well satisfied to have my company at home when her daughters were absent; and my cousin Frank was altogether a person of too little consequence to have affected a serious person in any way. All this I presently perceived, yet not with the pleasure which might have been expected, but rather with something like indignation, in discovering that I might do just as I liked, and that I and my religion

were of so little consequence in the family, as to afford no hope whatever of the violent persecution which I had promised myself.

“The excuse offered by me relative to the recent death of my mother for not going out, had not only been judged sufficient for my not going to the play, but was pleaded for me by my cousins during many months afterwards, whenever any little party of pleasure was in agitation ; insomuch that I at length became offended, and had I not been checked by shame, should have said more than once, ‘I think it ought to have been left to me to decline joining the proposed party.’

“Thus, as I have before intimated, several months passed away, during which, it being then the summer half-year, the town was nearly empty, all the fashionable people being either at watering-places or at their country houses ; and among these was the celebrated Miss Hawkins, of whom my cousins had always a vast deal to say. Throughout this interval, which my cousins called a very dull one, the family was now and then enlivened by short visits from Sir Timothy, who residing some miles out of town, as my cousin Geoffry had remarked, found it more agreeable, whenever business required him to spend a night in town, to take his meals at my uncle’s house, and to rattle away with my cousins, than to spend his lonely hours at the inn. On these occasions it was generally contrived that I should be as much out of the way as possible, my aunt always finding some little employment for me at the further end of the house ; a circumstance which, while the ideas of Theophilus and my mother were fresh in my mind, was of so little importance to me as not to call forth my observation. But, as I before remarked, being totally destitute of the vital spirit of religion, it was not to be wondered at, if the worldly conversation which I daily heard, and the worldly precepts which were daily inculcated in the family, should at length carry their baneful influence to my heart, and give an entirely new direction to my desires.

“During this interval, my religion, such as it was, having neither opposition nor encouragement to support it, gradually expired, going out as a lamp without oil, or dying away as a body without nourishment, being actually starved to death ; so that after a while there remained of

it nothing more than that kind of shame, which always attends persons who are sensible of having relinquished principles which they were once known to support not only with warmth, but with credit to themselves. Sometimes, indeed, at this period, certain recollections of former days, or the sight of my Bible, or of my Theophilus's hymn-book, would excite in my mind some degree of compunction; on which occasions, I never failed trying to console myself by a renewal of certain lately neglected forms, when my Bible would be again taken from the shelf, and the dust wiped from the cover of my manual. But these momentary feelings of regret became gradually weaker, shorter, and less frequent, till, after a while, they almost ceased to recur at all.

“The month of October at length arriving, the absent families returned to town, and elegant equipages of every kind rolled through the streets. One morning, my aunt reported at breakfast that Mr. Hawkins was expected that very day; my uncle's head servant having seen the housekeeper, who had been sent before to prepare every thing for the reception of the family, and to take off the covers of the new drawing-room furniture. ‘And Betty tells me,’ added my aunt, addressing her daughters, ‘that Mrs. Beverley says, if you wish to see the new furniture and Miss Hawkins's picture, which are just come from town, she will be ready to shew them to you at ten o'clock: but you must not be later on any account, lest the family should suddenly arrive.’

“My female cousins instantly acquiesced in this proposal, expressing their thankfulness to Mrs. Beverley: on which, Geoffry remarked, that he wondered his sisters should think of going into a house at the invitation of a servant: a house, too, where they did not visit.

“‘If we did visit there, Geoffry, there would be no need,’ replied my cousin Dolly, ‘to go on such an invitation.’

“‘Need!’ returned Geoffry, ‘what need can there be in the case? Go to a cabinet-maker's shop, if you want to see fine furniture.’

“‘Yes; but we can't see Miss Hawkins's picture in a cabinet-maker's shop,’ replied Dolly.

“‘And you are so fond of Miss Hawkins,’ returned

Geoffry, with a sneer, 'that you cannot live without seeing her picture?'

"'O!' said my cousin Esther, 'but I want to see how she looks on canvas.'

"'You may see how she looks in artificial colours whenever you see her at all,' returned Geoffry, laughing.

"'For shame, son,' said my aunt; 'I am sure the young lady uses no such things.'

"'Does not she?' returned Geoffry, finishing his speech with a whistle, which set the whole company into a loud burst of laughter.

"'The conversation then diverged from Miss Hawkins to her father's kitchen and stable; and in this part of the discourse my aunt displayed as intimate a knowledge of the inhabitants and arrangements of the kitchen, as my cousin Frank did with those of the stables. Dull and utterly uninteresting as this kind of conversation may appear to a cultivated mind, not to say any thing of a *renewed* one, it possesses a kind of fascination for ordinary ones, which can only be accounted for by the extremely degraded state of human nature. That same being who cannot see God in his works, who neither fears him on account of his power, nor honours him for his greatness, is ever ready to pay a kind of idolatrous worship to such of his poor fellow-creatures as may be attended by any little circumstances of more than ordinary splendour; and the narrower his views of life, the more forward we see him in his petty acts of adulation: insomuch that in the eye of the cottager the village squire is probably a greater being than the crowned head in the opinion of the courtier. True religion is, however, the only principle which sets these matters in the proper point of view; and while we are instructed thereby to give all men the honour due unto them, we are preserved from those little meannesses by which the great are injured and the poor degraded. But enough of this at present.

"After breakfast, my cousins prepared for their visit to Mr. Hawkins's housekeeper, and I requested permission to accompany them.

"As we were about to turn into Mr. Hawkins's premises, through certain iron gates in the front of the

house, I observed an elderly gentleman in black approaching. My cousins, who also saw him, instantly pronounced him to be a stranger; but another glance convinced me that he was no stranger to me, but my old friend and pastor, Mr. Barret. On making this discovery, I started, and retreated within the gates. I leave it to the reader of this narrative to judge of the feelings which induced me to shun this good man, whom a few months before I should have received as a father. I saw a glimpse of the black coat of this excellent person as he passed by the iron gates, and congratulated myself that I was not at home if he should call at my uncle's.

"We were received with a kind of condescending politeness by Mrs. Beverley, and carried round every apartment in due form. I had only come to see the picture, and wished to see nothing else; but my cousins appeared interested in every thing, and examined even the texture of the curtains, and the form of the bell-ropes. At length we were introduced into the drawing-room; and there I saw a very showy, full-length portrait of a kind of Amazonian lady, which, although declared by every one to be very handsome, did not meet my ideas of female beauty. However, by the time I returned home, what with the conversation of the house-keeper, and the importance which my cousins had given to every thing relative to Miss Hawkins, I was filled with an idea of her great consequence, and an assurance that there must be something very extraordinary about her.

"Mr. Barret, according to my expectation, had called at my uncle's during my absence; and I was not sorry to hear my aunt say, that she had seen him a short time afterwards going out of town in the stage-coach.

"The week following our visit to Mr. Hawkins's house the annual races took place; and though I did not go out on the occasion, yet, as our house was in one of the most public streets, such scenes of vanity were displayed before my eyes as I had never witnessed before. I spent each day at the window, and became acquainted with the colour and arms of every carriage which went to the course; my aunt being my instructress, for my cousins were otherwise engaged in the various amusements which

so gay a season supplied. 'There,' my aunt would say, 'there is Lord L——'s carriage: it is not new; it has been at these races twice before. Lady Di Bellamy's is next: it has been to town to be repaired and painted; any one would take it for new; it looks very handsome! but the old lady herself is a shocking fright, even with her flaxen wig and false teeth. Betty tells me that she is painted both red and white; for Betty's aunt's cousin's husband is footman there. And now comes Mr. Hawkins's coach! Look, Jenetta! look at the horses! But Miss Hawkins is not in it; I wonder where she can be! There is only the old gentleman, and Mrs. Willington his sister, and her daughter, and Mrs. Careless, in the coach. But O! here comes Sir Timothy's new barouche, and his four fine greys; and, bless me! Sir Timothy himself on the box! and, as I am alive, Miss Hawkins by him! Look, child! look! Is not she a fine woman? And who are those in the barouche?—Four elegant women! O! the Hortons, from Castle Crome. Sir Timothy has been talked of for one of them: but they are as poor as rats; and four more daughters at home!'

"Sir Timothy, I observed, never looked towards our window as he passed, which I remarked to my aunt, who blushed, and said, 'Why, my dear, when a gentleman is driving in such a crowd, it's not so easy, you know, to be observing all that is passing about him.'

" 'Perhaps not,' I said; notwithstanding which, I felt dissatisfied, and for the first time wished that my grandfather had not been a farmer, and that my uncle had not kept a shop.

"On the morning after the third day of the races, while all the great people were going out of town, I was present at the following conversation between my cousin Geoffry and his sisters.—

" 'Well, young ladies,' said he, 'did you find Sir Timothy very agreeable at the ball last night?'—at the same time winking at his father.

" 'He was very polite,' said Esther.

" 'But I will be bound he did not dance with one of you,' returned Geoffry.

" 'No,' replied Dolly somewhat hesitatingly, 'but he made a very pretty apology.'

“ ‘Did he so?’ said Geoffry, knocking under the table with his knuckles, ‘and the next time he calls here, you would do wisely by making some pretty apology for not seeing him.’

“ ‘Why, you ought to consider, Geoffry,’ said Dolly, ‘that when a gentleman comes with a large party to a ball-room, he is bound to dance with his own party; and there were four Miss Hortons, and Miss Hawkins, with him, and he was forced to dance with the steward’s lady: and as there were but six sets, and as Sir Timothy said himself——’

“ ‘Well, well,’ said Geoffry, interrupting her, ‘it is no business of mine, but just as far as you are my sisters, and so belong to me; but if you choose to make fools of yourselves, as long as your father and mother are alive to give you their advice I may as well hold my tongue, but this I know, and I am sure my cousin Jenetta here will approve of what I say, that if I were a young lady, provided a man did not choose to acknowledge me at one time, I should take care not to acknowledge him at another.’

“ ‘I certainly agree with you, Geoffry,’ I said, with a degree of pertness which was at that time customary to me.

“ ‘And what should you know about these things?’ said Dolly. ‘You, who have been brought up among the Methodists, and know no more of the world than the child unborn? I am sure, Geoffry, I am amazed that you should ask Jenetta’s opinion in such a case.’

“ Geoffry replied with warmth; and the altercation between the young parties rose to such a height, that my uncle in a loud voice commanded silence, adding, however, that he believed his son was right, and saying, that he never saw any good come of great acquaintance, but to turn young girls’ heads, and unfit them for every common duty of life.

“ And here perhaps it will not be considered as out of its place, if I pause to make a few remarks which my bitter experience has suggested to me on the nature of public amusements, and especially of those occasions on which young people meet to dance in a promiscuous manner. I cannot but look upon a public ball, especially as those things are now ordered, as more lowering

to female delicacy than any thing which can well be conceived, in which common morals are not openly outraged. In former years, no respectable young lady went to a ball without being provided with a partner in some relation or friend of the family, and with this partner she associated during the whole of the evening ; but in the present day, a young lady is taken into public, and exposed to be chosen or rejected, as the humour of her male acquaintance may suggest. Nay, she is taught to feel herself obliged to every impertinent coxcomb who may relieve her from the awkwardness of appearing to be neglected or overlooked ; and consequently she is thenceforth led to put a value upon those kind of passing attentions from the other sex, which a truly pious and wise young woman would shun, as lowering to her own moral character, and seldom tending even to the promotion of her temporal advancement. We cannot suppose that a very young person should see the evil tendency of all these things ; we therefore entreat the attention of mothers, and especially of serious mothers, to these subjects, and supplicate them, as they value the present and future peace, the honour and dignity of their daughters, to keep them separate from the world, and to withdraw them from those scenes in which they must be indebted to strangers of the other sex for those attentions and that support which they ought to receive either under the shelter of a parent's roof, or from their natural friends and respectable relations. It has been remarked, that in every country as the Christian religion has more or less prevailed, the female character has proportionably risen or fallen.

“The beauty of the female character consists much in humility ; humility as it regards God, and humility as it regards man. Even in religious societies, where the females take a forward part, or assume any superiority over the other sex in the way of talking or teaching, so much is generally deducted from that amiable modesty which is their chief ornament. And hence the beautiful effect of that faith, which enables the female to cast all her cares upon God, teaching her to renounce all effort to shine in the sight of the world, and sweetly constraining her to the quiet observance of those private and domestic duties, for which she was evidently formed by

Him, who is at once her shield and her exceeding great reward.

“But who would have thought that such instructions could be drawn from such a text? or that we could have been led from the consideration of a partner at a race-ball to the contemplation of such high and important matters? My reader will readily excuse me, if she is serious, for having thus stolen a sermon upon her; and if not so, she may perhaps hereafter thank me for the surprise I have occasioned. But to return to my story, over which I fear I have lingered somewhat too long.

“About this time, Sir Timothy, who has lately been a person of much consequence in my tale, was called to parliament, and we saw very little of him for nearly two years. It was, however, still much talked of, that he was to marry Miss Hawkins, who was often in London with her father.

“In the mean time, I became gradually less and less serious, falling more and more into my cousin’s habits and ways of thinking. I can give little account of the way in which we spent this long interval: I can scarcely remember any thing of it, but that we talked a great deal, visited a great deal, dressed a great deal, and that I took a few private lessons in dancing, in learning to draw flowers, to cut paper for filigree boxes, and to embroider muslin. All this while, I never once heard the name of Theophilus, and allowed my cousins to speak of my former friends in Leeds as a set of enthusiastical Methodists who would have made a fool of me if I had stayed with them a few years longer.

“I had now attained my twenty-second year, and was reckoned to be much handsomer than my cousins—a circumstance which gave me no small satisfaction. About this period my aunt was taken ill, and the medical gentlemen ordered her to Cheltenham. However, as her illness was not of an alarming nature, the young people of the family heard this proposal of going to a gay watering-place, to which many of the fashionable families of the town had the custom of repairing every year, with a degree of pleasure which afforded a sufficient proof of the weariness to which we were exposed by our present mode of life, which, to speak the truth, was infinitely more tiresome, and less interesting, than that

which I had formerly led at Leeds, even granting that I had not any real taste for spiritual things. But I had there been engaged in many active charities, which served to fill up and occupy my mind with something of a solid and satisfactory nature; whereas the vapid occupations in which I had lately been engaged, neither gave any pleasure at the time, nor left any satisfaction in the reflection.

“It was soon settled that Dolly should stay at home to keep house, while Esther, Bessy, and myself should accompany my aunt; Dolly’s disappointment being to be made up by a journey to town, in the winter, to see a distant relation.

“There was no want of money in my uncle’s family, and, in consequence, great were the preparations undertaken in order to enable us to make a fashionable appearance in this gayest of all gay places.

“At length, all being prepared, we set out, accompanied by Frank; and, on reaching the place of our destination, we hired a handsome lodging in Suffolk-place, which those who have visited Cheltenham will recognize as being very near to and in the same area with the largest and most showy of the well-houses.

“Cheltenham, which is situated in Gloucestershire, chiefly consists of one long street, through which the company parade from morning till night in the most irksome way imaginable; at least I should think so now, whatever I may formerly have thought. On a line with the town, on the left of your approach from the west, there is a range of chalky hills, which hurt the eye from their want of verdure. And on the right are shady walks, diverging from the street towards the three pump-rooms and the new buildings in their vicinity. An extremely fine avenue of elm trees leads to the oldest of these rooms, which is now comparatively neglected. The other two of these pump-rooms are situated in gardens, decorated in the French style, one of them being encircled with a wide verandah, and the other ornamented on the summit with the statue of some heathen divinity or emblematic character, I forget which.

“To those who have visited many public places of this kind it is needless to describe the various vanities which presented themselves to our view on our arrival

at Cheltenham; and to those who have never seen any thing of the kind, it is scarcely possible to succeed in bringing such a scene before them. Suffice it to say, that, on finding ourselves there, we were altogether, not excepting my aunt, like persons intoxicated with vanity: we remodelled all our dresses, and affected the extremes of fashion; laughing, talking, and walking, from morning to night: for it is one of the effects of these gay places to excite a perpetual restlessness, so that we were none of us able to sit at home, but were continually at the pump-rooms, in the street, or in the shops; and not seldom finished our daily career of folly at a ball or in the theatre. We presently acquired all the fashionable phrases of the place, got acquainted with the histories of the most remarkable characters, called the young men by their Christian names, and were, in fact, as ridiculous as fashion and folly could make us.

“And now, had I not determined to furnish a short history of my life, by way of affording some little warning to other young people who may at any time come into a situation resembling my own, I should here break off my narrative; my folly and its ruinous consequences striking me in a point of view which causes my tears to flow and mingle continually with my ink. But I will proceed, and should think myself amply repaid for the anguish I endure in the performance of this task, with the assurance that one person would hereafter take warning by my example.

“Had I, like Esther and Bessy, never known the way of righteousness; had I never been told the danger and sin of accommodating myself to this present evil world; some little excuse might have been pleaded in my favour. But I had not even this poor apology to urge; I knew I was doing wrong, and though daily under this persuasion, I pursued my mad career.

“We had been at Cheltenham little more than a fortnight, when one morning Frank came in and informed us that he had just parted from Sir Timothy, and that he expected him to call in a few minutes.

“‘Sir Timothy at Cheltenham?’ said Esther; ‘well this is delightful.’

“She had scarcely spoken, before a very loud knock at the door announced the arrival of the person in ques-

tion; and Sir Timothy presently appeared, little changed by his long residence in town, excepting in certain particulars not worth mentioning, relative to the cut of his hair and the arrangement of his cravat.

“The meeting between him and my cousins struck me, although I was by this time somewhat used to their easy and inelegant familiarity, as appearing more to resemble that of some great school-boy and his sisters, on the return of the former from school, than what is customary between ladies and gentlemen; but as my aunt stood by and laughed, I was disposed to think all was proper. However, when Sir Timothy, calling me by my name, would have accosted me in the same manner, I drew back, and gave him to understand that he was not to make so free with me as he did with my companions.

“On this my cousin Frank burst into a loud laugh, and said, ‘Why, cousin, I vow you have made Sir Tim blush!—a thing which has not happened, it is my belief, these ten years.’ Then turning to the young baronet, ‘You cannot think, Sir Timothy, what a fine lady our little starched prim Methodist is become.’

“‘If I cannot *think*, Frank, at any rate I suppose you will give me credit for being able to *see*,’ he replied. ‘And I do see such a change in Miss Jenetta,’ he added, bowing to me, ‘as perfectly dazzles my eyes and fills me with astonishment.’

“This fine beginning was, to the utter astonishment and mortification of my aunt and cousins, followed up in a manner so lively by Sir Timothy, that from that day he was constantly at our lodgings, always joined us when we walked, and paid me such attentions, as not only flattered my vanity, but made me anxious to let my cousin Esther see that I considered myself as having obtained a great triumph over her.

“‘You are vastly pleased, Jenetta,’ said she to me one day, ‘at these attentions of Sir Timothy; but let me see him pay you the same attentions in our town and before Miss Hawkins, and then I shall indeed think something of them.’

“‘Then you would think more of them than I do,’ I answered; ‘for though I am at present amused and flattered by his assiduities, I should not desire them to become serious.’

“ ‘And why not?’ she asked.

“ At that moment, a hasty comparison passed through my mind between Sir Timothy and the far more agreeable person of Theophilus; and I was silent. But Bessy answered her sister by saying for me, ‘Don’t believe a word she says; she would give her ears to be a baronet’s lady, and triumph over Miss Hawkins.’

“ The idea of being a lady and triumphing over Miss Hawkins had never precisely occurred to me before; but now that these things were presented to my imagination, I thought I could enjoy both, provided a marriage with Sir Timothy was not a necessary preliminary. While these things were fresh in my mind, Sir Timothy came in, and telling me that there was a band of music about to play in the walks, requested me to accompany him to the pump-room; adding, while I was tying on my hat, ‘And who do you think are in the room? Who, but old Hawkins and his gay daughter!’

“ I looked with amazement at my cousins, who instantly prepared to follow us with their brother, in order to see the end of this unaccountable business.

“ The band was beginning to play as we entered the pump-room; the evening was a remarkably fine one; the air was embalmed with the odour of many flowers, which were worn in the breasts of the company, and with many rich perfumes scattered over their clothes.

“ The first person I saw on entering the room was Miss Hawkins, walking with her father. I immediately perceived that she was troubled by seeing me with Sir Timothy; I discovered also that he enjoyed her perplexity, and endeavoured to increase it by the most marked attentions, and an appearance of the utmost regard. For a moment I enjoyed my triumph in as complete a manner as such a triumph could be enjoyed by the emptiest trifler. I laughed, I talked aloud, I looked gaily round me, and played off the fine lady as completely as if I had been bred and born in the precincts of St. James’s. But in the midst of this heartless and unholy triumph, my eye suddenly caught the figure of a young man, who, sitting in a retired part of the room, was looking at me with such earnestness that Sir Timothy himself observed it, as I found by his looking from him to me, bending down to my face for the pur-

pose. For a moment I seemed like one in a dream, without being able to collect my thoughts: but this state of confusion was instantly followed by a certainty that the person I beheld was Theophilus. No one could be mistaken in his noble air and fine countenance, excellent in all the beauty of holiness. A darker glow than was natural to him indicated his having been exposed to the ardent sun of some warmer climate; while a certain degree of attenuation in his features marked some derangement of health: yet he never appeared more pleasing, more interesting, in my eyes, than at that moment, although astonishment and even high displeasure were visible in his countenance when his eyes met mine. He however arose and came up to me, saying, 'Miss Manering, do I see you? I thought at first that I must be mistaken.'

"As he spoke I drew my arm hastily from Sir Timothy's, and felt my face flush with shame. 'O! Theophilus!' I said; more I could not add, for my voice faltered, and my eyes filled with tears.

"He looked at me, I thought, with compassion; and then cast a hasty glance at my companion. 'Where are you to be found?' he asked.

"I gave him a card with my address.

"He received it with a bow; wished me a good morning in a voice of forced composure; and quitted the room; leaving me overwhelmed with a thousand painful feelings.

"After his departure, Sir Timothy offered his arm again, which I declined, saying, that I wished to sit down. He then led me to a seat, and, placing himself by me, began to rally me upon the agitation which I had betrayed at the sight of this young stranger. He went on a long time, for I could not answer him; but I might have been convinced by his unconcern on this occasion, that although he for some private reasons of his own chose to amuse himself with me, and to make a public display of his attentions, yet that I had no real interest in his affections. His presence, however, was now become so completely irksome to me, that I rejoiced when he proposed our walking back to my aunt's lodgings; where I had many questions to answer respecting Theophilus, and much raillery to endure from my cousins,

who had been accurate observers of all that passed in the pump-room.

“I could fill volumes with a description of the various thoughts which passed through my mind from that time till the noon of the following day; at which time Theophilus called, and was received alone by me, I having excused myself from going out on the plea of not being well, which indeed was not far from the truth; for my mind was in such a tumult as very visibly to disorder my whole frame.

“I had given orders that if a gentleman called to see me, he should be admitted. Theophilus was accordingly introduced into a small parlour, where I presently joined him. On entering the room, he looked very seriously, and spoke to me with marked coldness. He then informed me, in few words, that he had been obliged to leave his situation abroad, and return for a short time to England, on account of his health; that he had been ordered to Cheltenham, but having learned since his arrival that the waters were not suited to his case, and that nothing more was probably necessary for him than the air of his native country, he had resolved to leave the place next day.

“I felt this keenly; believing that the time had been, when Theophilus would not have shewn such haste to leave the place where I was. However, I replied, that I was sorry he was going so soon, and that I should, in consequence, see so little of him.

“He bowed, but seemed to receive this compliment as a matter of course; and soon after was rising to depart, when, in extreme agitation, I stopped him, and addressing him by the same familiar name which I had been accustomed to use in our childhood—‘Stay! stay, Theophilus,’ I said, ‘stay one moment only, and answer me this question—Have I entirely forfeited your esteem?’ A burst of tears accompanied this question, and I sunk back on my chair in an agony of remorse and shame:

“He turned from the door as I spoke; a fine flush passing over his features, which was instantly followed by a deadly paleness. He came close up to me, and taking a chair next to me, ‘No, Jenetta,’ he said, ‘my dear Jenetta Mannering, you have not forfeited my esteem; or rather, if yesterday you made me to doubt,

to-day you have regained my confidence. But why,' he said, 'why do I see the daughter of the late pious Mrs. Mannering, the spiritual pupil of the excellent Mr. Barret, why do I see her not only living in a scene of vanity, and associating with the votaries of fashion, but herself acting the most conspicuous part in these scenes of folly? Excuse this strong expression; but you, Jenetta, were not thus educated; you have no excuse to plead of this kind. What am I to think? What can I think?' So saying, he rose and walked to the window: but returning again in a moment, and taking my hand, he looked earnestly in my face, as if soliciting an explanation.

"As soon as I could command my feelings sufficiently, I explained to him the change of my situation; informing him that I was now, and had been for some years, in a worldly dissipated family, by whose evil example I had been drawn away from the path of duty; adding, what I then believed to be true, that my heart was still with the Lord and his people.

"He might have urged the possibility of a mistake; for it is possible to love certain individuals of the people of the Lord for qualities which are amiable and excellent in them, without having any real love or feeling of religion. Innumerable are the arts which Satan uses in order to keep up the illusions of sin: and none perhaps are stronger than that particular temptation under which I then lay, a natural and unsanctified sentiment of regard for a certain pious individual leading me to suppose that the dread of having forfeited his regard was a revival of religious feeling. Whether Theophilus understood what was passing in my mind or not, I cannot tell; but through the whole of this interview he looked inexpressibly serious, and cautioned me with such earnestness against yielding to the temptations of the world, that I inwardly resolved to renounce every worldly pleasure at once, and to devote myself entirely to God, still, as I say, being unacquainted with the motives which secretly actuated me.

"Our conversation was protracted for a length of time, both seeming unwilling to separate. At length, Theophilus seeing my aunt and cousins coming up to the door of the house, arose in haste, and pressing my hand within his, 'Jenetta,' he said, 'my dear Jenetta, I must

go ; but I shall hope to see you again before I leave England. An aunt of Mr. Barret lives in a small house near your town in Staffordshire, and she has invited me to spend a little time with her : I hope to visit her about Christmas, sooner I think I cannot. I shall then see you again.' So saying, he left me in a state of mind much more tranquil than that in which he had found me.

"I do not trouble my reader with a recapitulation of all the silly remarks of my cousins on this visit of Theophilus. I was too happy at the moment to care for any thing that might be said ; and even the continued attentions of Sir Timothy were a circumstance of utter unimportance to me.

"So long as the conversation of Theophilus was still fresh in my mind, my Bible and hymn-book became again my frequent companions ; while the artificial flowers and topknots of various description fell from my now humbled head. Impressions, however, which are not made by a divine hand, are never to be depended upon : so in a few weeks no further effect remained on my mind from the visit of Theophilus, than that which was merely the consequence of natural and common causes ; namely, an awakening and renewal of mere earthly attachment.

"Very shortly after Theophilus had quitted Cheltenham, we returned home ; where the conduct of Sir Timothy towards me was related to such of the family as we had left behind. Sir Timothy was now gone again to London.

"On hearing her sisters' report, Miss Dolly was all amazement ; but Geoffry, laughing, said, 'I have no idea of Sir Timothy's having any more serious thoughts of my cousin Jenetta, than he had of my sister Esther.'

"Then what,' said Bessy, 'could induce him to behave as he did in the presence of Miss Hawkins ?'

"I don't pretend,' replied Geoffry, 'to account for all the caprices of Sir Timothy. Miss Hawkins, perhaps, had offended him, and he wished to pique her pride ; but I would venture to make any bet, that Sir Timothy, though he had no objection to be seen with little Jenetta Mannering, the farmer's granddaughter, at Cheltenham, where no one knew her, would not be seen with her in the streets of this town for a thousand pounds.'

“ ‘I am not anxious to be seen with him in any street of any town,’ I replied, somewhat offended by this remark of Geoffry’s. ‘I am quite as indifferent to Sir Timothy as he can be to me.’

“ ‘I don’t know that,’ said Geoffry; ‘young ladies like a title and a coach and four.’

“ ‘At any rate,’ I answered, ‘even if I should like a title and a carriage and four, I may not like the man to whom they belong.’

“ ‘The man!’ said Geoffry; ‘who cares in these days, what the man may be? The question now is, among the young ladies, what he has.’

“ ‘And a very proper enquiry too,’ I answered, ‘when the present race of young men have so little personal merit to distinguish them one from another.’

“ ‘Much more than I have related might be added to the same purpose, which passed on this subject in our family discussions. Suffice it to say, that my aunt and cousins adopted Geoffry’s opinions; and, whether to mortify me or not I cannot determine, used frequently to say to me, ‘You must not buoy up your mind with the idea of marrying Sir Timothy; for we are well assured that he won’t know you, even with the help of his quizzing-glass, at the time of the races.’

“I cannot suppose that my reader will imagine for one moment that my heart was concerned in the least degree about the conduct of Sir Timothy. But if my affections were wholly unmoved on the occasion, not so was my vanity—than which, perhaps, there is not a more powerful passion of the unregenerate heart. And, alas! even in those who are regenerate, in those whose affections are, in some measure, renewed, how often do we see the triumph of this evil passion over every better feeling! How often is the usefulness of the Christian teacher marred by this execrable weakness! and how frequently do we see, even in the minister of God, the Divinity plucked from his throne, while the idol man is presented in his place, to receive the homage and adulation of the people! But no more of this. Suffice it to say, that while my whole heart was secretly devoted to Theophilus, I looked forward with anxiety to the races as a time when my triumph over my cousins would, I trusted, appear complete.

“At length the time approached: the town filled; and Sir Timothy was said to be in the country. On the eve of the first day, Frank informed us that he was arrived, and that he had brought an entirely new and most beautiful open carriage.

“On this occasion, my cousins looked at me. I knew what was passing in their minds, but I took no notice.

“Early the next day, Sir Timothy passed our door twice. Once he stopped, and, speaking to my cousins, who stood at the window, asked them if they meant to go to the course?—to which they replied in the affirmative. He bowed, and walked on.

“During that morning, I had much to suffer from the ridicule of my cousin Geoffry. I use the word *suffer*, because my vanity did really make me suffer on the occasion; for I now began to apprehend that I should be mortified.

“‘Cousin,’ he said, ‘you must be content with a hack-chaise to the races; it is mortifying, but it cannot be helped: if I had an open carriage and four to lend you, it should be at your service.’

“‘Do you not know,’ I replied, ‘that I don’t approve of races; I never went to them but once, and I had no pleasure when there.’

“We dined early that day; and while we were at dinner, the ordinary broke up, and we perceived the carriages of the great people beginning to be in motion. My cousins ran to the window, and I was watching an opportunity of escaping unobserved to my own room, when the young people exclaimed, ‘Sir Timothy’s carriage! It is just coming up the street! How beautiful! how dashing! Here it comes! It is drawing up to the door: it stops!’ At that moment we heard a thundering knock, and I felt my heart beat with a violence which the occasion did not warrant—but happy would it have been for me, humanly speaking, happy certainly as far as my temporal concerns were affected; happy would it have been for me, if it had then ceased to beat for ever. Nevertheless, he who brings the greatest good out of evil, prolonged my life, in order to pour blessings upon me, for which I never shall cease to praise him throughout the endless circles of eternity. But to return to my narrative.

“The thundering at the door was followed by Sir Timothy, who, entering the room with a hasty and familiar air, said, ‘Come, Jenetta, are you ready?—may I hope for your company on the course in my barouche?’

“I waited only to throw a hasty glance of triumph round the room, and, running up stairs, appeared again in a few moments prepared to accompany Sir Timothy, who, as he handed me to his carriage, said, ‘Charming girl! how well you look!’

“We were now whirled through the streets as rapidly as four horses could carry us. The course was about two miles from the town, and Sir Timothy, as we went along, frequently called to his horses in the appropriate language of the stable, swearing he would be in before a certain young lord who had left the town a few minutes before him. We proceeded very well till we came to a certain part of the road where, by means of a narrow lane, a shorter cut is obtained to the race-ground. By taking this road, Sir Timothy hoped to cut out his rival; and, accordingly, he called out to his outriders, ‘Dash on! dash on to the left!’ when, with a sudden whirl, we found ourselves carried out of the crowd into the lane. Through this unpromising lane we went tearing on with sufficient success, the hedges, trees, and cottages seeming to fly from us as we passed, and certain overhanging boughs more than once striking me on the face. At length, we came to the brow of a little hill, from which we saw the race-ground before us at no great distance. Here the horses would have relaxed their pace; but Sir Timothy crying out with an oath, ‘Dash on!’ we began to descend the hill at a pace which made me tremble. At length, the carriage pressing on the horses, they became restive; the leaders began to rear, and Sir Timothy to rave. I called on him aloud to take care, and looked around for some one to help; but my cries were vain. Of this scene I remember no more than seeing the horses rear, and perceiving the figure of a young man, who, running out from a house on the way-side, jumped over the hedge, and advanced to the leading-horses. I know no more, and can recall nothing else than a violent crash, and a confused noise; after which I lost all recollection.

“A variety of confused and miserable fancies now

successively followed this awful moment—ideas of pain, horror, and anguish. I found myself lying on a bed in a place I did not know, where I saw strangers moving about me; and methought these people occasionally put me to dreadful pain.

“Amid these dark scenes, the knowledge I possessed of religion seemed to minister only to my misery; while indistinct views of death, and hell, and an offended God, were successively presented to my mind.

“At length I was blessed with a long and refreshing sleep; from which I awoke to a clearer view of my situation. I found myself lying in a neat old-fashioned bedroom, the window of which was Gothic, and in part shaded with an eglantine in flower. A narrow chimney-piece and small grate filled up one corner of the room; the grate was ornamented with Dutch tiles, and a few antiquated chimney-ornaments of glass were arranged on the mantle-piece. The room was hung with an old-fashioned paper, made to resemble cut velvet; and by my bedside stood an old lady in black, with a close mob-cap and shawl. She was not looking at me when I opened my eyes, but was speaking in a low tone to a young man who stood with his back toward me, whose tall and graceful figure immediately suggested the idea of Theophilus. I spoke; but do not recollect what I said: on which they both turned to me, when I exclaimed, ‘Oh! Theophilus!’ He instantly hastened to the head of the bed, and calling me by my name, I repeated, ‘Oh! Theophilus!’ and, bursting into tears, again lost my recollection.

“As it was some time after this before I could distinctly comprehend my situation, I shall not wait to develop it gradually to my reader as it was unfolded to myself, but state it immediately, in order to prevent confusion.

“The house into which I had been conveyed when thrown from the carriage, and where I happened to be at the moment of losing my recollection, had been occupied for several months by Mrs. Townsend, the aunt of Mr. Barret, the old lady whom Theophilus had mentioned to me at Cheltenham.

“Theophilus had purposed to pay her a visit at Christmas, but, from a motive which the reader may

easily imagine, having hastened his visit some weeks, he had actually arrived that very morning : but finding the town in confusion by reason of the races, he thought it better to defer calling upon me till the bustle should be over.

“It was Theophilus whom I had seen springing over the hedge to seize the heads of the horses, who were about to plunge themselves into a deep ravine on the side of the road, but arriving too late, nothing remained for him to do but to raise me from the ground and carry me into the house ; where being laid on a bed, it was soon found that I had received such an injury on the head as left only a very slender probability of my recovery. The carriage was dashed to pieces, and Sir Timothy himself carried home with a broken arm.

“From that time, which was many many days, I had remained with Mrs. Townsend ; my aunt and cousins having only occasionally visited me, while the tender Theophilus watched me with the most anxious care, being now chiefly solicitous that I might be spared to see the error of my way, and be brought to a knowledge of my sin, and my need of a Saviour. Having thus stated the case, I return to my own feelings.

“After the occasion I have spoken of, on which I seemed for a moment to recover my recollection, and had recognized Theophilus, I became delirious again, and remained for a long time incapable of distinguishing the distressing imaginations of my disordered brain from the realities which surrounded me. During this period, I have some idea of seeing Theophilus by me at times, and hearing him address me : but his voice appeared to me mournful and hollow, and his face altered and death-like. I also had confused recollections of past times, particularly of the very early days of my youth, of my visit to my grandfather, and the places where I used to play with Theophilus ; and, as I was afterwards told, I spoke of those days, and of things which then took place, in a manner well understood by the companion of those innocent pleasures. Through this whole interval I was consumed by a dreadful fever which nothing could mitigate, accompanied with a violent thirst which nothing could allay.

“Many months passed in this way, during which time

I was most tenderly nursed by Mrs. Townsend ; Theophilus remaining nearly the whole time at her house, and visiting me many times in the day.

“At length the season arrived, though I knew it not, when it was necessary for him to return to his duty abroad.

“I still however recollect, amid the dark and hopeless scenes of delirium and mental disorder, the last time that I was visited by Theophilus. He came to my bedside with Mrs. Townsend, and I remember that he stood looking at me with folded arms, and an expression of deep sorrow. Then turning to the window, his eyes being full of tears, ‘Oh ! Mrs. Townsend,’ he said, ‘for my sake, never, never abandon her!’ I cannot recall her answer, for I remember nothing connectedly at that time ; but I recollect his coming again to my bedside, and looking earnestly at me, whereupon I closed my eyes, having, like most persons in my situation, a dread of being looked at : and then, probably supposing I was asleep, or thinking I should not understand what was passing, ‘Farewell, beloved Jenetta,’ he said, ‘you have indeed destroyed all my earthly prospects ; but it was perhaps right that I should meet with this painful disappointment. I now return to my post : may the Lord assist me to do my duty there ! Mrs. Townsend, you will never forsake her !’ I heard no more ; and from that time I never saw Theophilus.

“Several years passed before I recovered the injury done to my head, and before I was able to leave my room, or even to reflect and converse without a mixture of derangement. During this period, I was reduced by suffering to a mere shadow ; my bloom was gone ; I was in constitution become an old woman ; my earthly hopes were all blasted ; and nothing remained for me to desire but always to live with Mrs. Townsend, for whom I had acquired a very tender affection.

“My aunt and cousins had paid so little attention to me during my illness, that I was quite weaned from them ; and I dreaded to see Sir Timothy, or any of those who had known me in former days. I therefore gladly left the country with Mrs. Townsend, about four years after my accident, who established herself in a retired situation in Berkshire, where I have resided ever since.

“Many years are now past, since that awful event

which put so sudden an end to my mad career of sin. Since then I have suffered much from bodily disease and mental languor, which prevent my making any peculiar exertion. In this interval I have heard of the death of Theophilus, who lived and died for the glorious cause to which, under divine influence, he had most unreservedly devoted himself; I have lost also my kind friend Mrs. Townsend; and am at length left alone in the world, feeble in body, and weak in mind. Nevertheless, I am more happy now than I was in the heyday of health and beauty; for my religion, which was once that of the head and of the lips, is now, through the divine blessing, become a religion of the heart. By the dreadful failure of which I had been guilty, I was emptied of self and brought to see that I was nothing—yea, to see that all my righteousness in former days had been but as filthy rags. I was taught to discover that no confidence could be placed in any effort I could make to help myself, inasmuch as I had no ability even to control and direct my own thoughts, much less to guide my actions. I was even constrained to acknowledge, that at the very period of my life when I held the fairest character for piety, I was no better than an infidel; neither possessing that love, nor that fear of God, which could influence my conduct in the smallest degree.

“Thus being brought to a conviction of unbelief, I was next induced to cry for help, though I could say little more than ‘Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.’ I now began to comprehend something of that doctrine, concerning which I had formerly heard so much, viz. that every man in his natural state, before the grace of God and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, has no faith; that all are shut up in unbelief, and that when the Holy Spirit effectually awakens any individual, he first convinces him of sin, and especially of the sin of unbelief.

“I remained a long while mourning and lamenting my want of faith, and counting myself an undone creature: till at length being enabled to throw myself entirely on the mercy of God, I soon was disposed to receive salvation with gladness, as a free gift, unmerited by me, and as a favour which the Lord might have withheld from me without injustice. In proportion as these blessed views prevailed, I found relief and comfort: my understanding

seemed to be enlarged, while my conscience was at once enlightened and relieved. My heart at length became engaged in the great business of religion—for *with the heart man believeth unto righteousness*. (Rom. x. 10.) It was made manifest to me, that a vital union between Christ and my soul had taken place; and under this assurance I was enabled to cry out with joy, ‘My beloved is mine, and I am his.’

“And now, in measure as my mind became enlightened on these subjects, peace and joy filled my heart; inasmuch that I could bless God for all I had suffered, and especially for that overwhelming event by which I had suddenly been stopped short in my career of sin. I could think even of Theophilus with resignation, yea, and praise my God for all that he was doing among the poor heathen in distant lands. It is true, that some natural tears would fall whenever I reflected upon the circumstances by which our separation had been brought about, and as often as I thought of the acknowledgment which he had made to Mrs. Townsend of his long cherished affection for me, so cruelly disappointed by my folly, for we were to meet no more on earth.

“Seven years are now past since my Theophilus entered into glory. A traveller told me that he had once seen his grave. It stands alone; no other grave of a Christian brother being near to it. It is situated at the foot of a palm tree, far, far from those who knew him in his early days, and who will never cease to think of him with affection. But the humble and poor people, whom he made acquainted with their Redeemer, no doubt still shew his cold resting-place to their children; and treasure up in their hearts the glorious doctrines which he inculcated among them; since it may truly be said,

‘The sweet remembrance of the just
Shall flourish when they sleep in dust.’”

The lady of the manor having finished the story of Jenetta Mannering, said, “My dear young people, I hope that this story may be rendered serviceable in affording you some little insight into the nature of faith, which is, as you perceive, entirely distinct from mere head-knowledge on the one hand, and from formal ob-

servances on the other. I could add much more on this subject; but since our story has occupied a considerable portion of the present evening, and as I trust that in the course of our undertaking we shall have many opportunities of enlarging on the same subject, we will at present drop it, and conclude the meeting in our usual manner."

The lady of the manor then knelt down, and, accompanied by her young people, offered up the following prayer.

A Prayer on Faith.

"O ALMIGHTY and BLESSED LORD GOD, thou glorious and incomprehensible Trinity, we thy unworthy creatures, who now presume to draw near the footstool of thy throne, do earnestly beseech thee to bestow upon us that first best gift of faith, by which alone the atoning death of thy Son can be made effectual to our salvation. We know that by nature we are all bound in sin and unbelief, and that we can never be delivered from this bondage, unless the regenerating power of thy Holy Spirit be exercised in our behalf. We know that we are unable to help ourselves, and that thou, O Lord, alone canst impart to us that faith without which it is impossible to please thee. Deign, therefore, O blessed Lord God, for thy dear Son's sake, to give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation, that the eyes of our understanding may be enlightened to see the infinite worth of the sufferings of our great Mediator, and the sufficiency of his merits to redeem his people from their sins. Assist us also to evidence our faith by a holy walk and conversation; enable us to live by faith, to depend on Christ's strength both for the will and power to do well, and on his prevailing intercession for the acceptance of our prayers, laying them all upon the golden altar which sanctifieth every gift. Grant that our whole dependence may be on Christ; that humbly relying on his grace, our whole conversation may be as becometh the Gospel of Christ, and calculated to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

"And now to God the Father," &c.

CHAPTER X.

And Thirdly, that I should keep God's holy Will and Commandments, and walk in the same all the Days of my Life.

Q. Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do as they have promised for thee?

A. Yes, verily; and by God's Help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this State of Salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his Grace, that I may continue in the same unto my Life's End.

AS soon as the lady of the manor saw herself again surrounded by her little party of young friends, she caused Miss Sophia to repeat the third clause of the baptismal vow: viz.—‘And thirdly, that I should keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.’

“My dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, “this is now the tenth period of our meetings; and I believe that not a single occasion has passed, in which I have not pointed out to you, either by precept or example, the exceeding corruption of man's nature, and his entire incapacity of turning and preparing himself for good works. One of the Articles of the Church of England is decisive upon this subject; being such as I shall repeat:—‘The condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith and calling upon God: wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that

good will.' (10th Article.) Such being the case," continued the lady of the manor, "as may be proved both from Scripture and experience, it is very certain that no person in his own proper strength can keep God's holy will and commandments, and that every attempt so to do will end in shame and disappointment. Nevertheless, when man is made a new creature by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, good works as naturally follow as good fruits from a good tree. Hence the faithful are known by their works; and it is invariably found that those teachers and ministers who succeed most largely in producing examples of good works among their pupils and auditors, are those who dwell most on the higher doctrines of religion, and publish, without disguise, the whole scheme of salvation, as it is delivered in Scripture.

"I have often intimated to you," proceeded the lady of the manor, "that no teacher or minister is in himself able to convert a single individual among those whom he is appointed to instruct. Nevertheless, it is every where found, that true Christian instructions are invariably followed sooner or later with the divine blessing, while the moral teacher rises up early and late takes rest without producing any perceptible effect, commonly leaving his hearers just as he found them, unconvinced and without amendment: such being the nature of sin, that when opposed by merely human efforts, it either acquires new strength, and presents a determined resistance which defies control, or it assumes a new form, and in that form commences some new act of rebellion against the Most High. An enlarged acquaintance with the commandments of God only renders a man more sensible of his sins, without giving him any power to overcome them; the law convinces a man of sin, and leaves him totally helpless; the law wounds, and leaves the wounded to perish. Were I, my dear young people, to entertain you for months to come on the subject of the purity and excellence of God's commandments, without pointing out to you whence strength must be derived for obeying those commandments, I should but add to your guilt and misery. The law can only assist an individual in his progress towards the kingdom of God, by giving him a clearer view of his own depravity, and thus pointing out to him the need of a Saviour. Hence the law is a school-

master to bring the sinner to Christ: *but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*" (Gal. iii. 25.)

The lady of the manor then proceeded, as her manner was, to relate a little adventure of her early days which she thought much to the present purpose.—"I once," said she, "during my travels, which have been various, resided for a few months in a small town, or rather village, as it would have been called from its dimensions and rural appearance, had it not possessed the privilege of a market. While residing in this place, I became acquainted with a family of sisters, who conducted a small seminary at about the distance of a mile from the town. The house and whole establishment brought to my mind the Palace Beautiful in the Pilgrim's Progress. The house was a large and ancient mansion, situated on a lawn, shaded in the back-ground by a grove of majestic oaks, and fronted by a garden abounding with fruits and flowers. The sisters who conducted the establishment were all modest, discreet, and pious, possessing that kind of beauty which is the effect of well-regulated minds and graceful habits. But what chiefly delighted me in this place, was the evident happiness of the young people whom Providence had drawn together to this desirable place of education. There I saw order united with cheerfulness, and subordination sweetened by affection. I often visited this place on fine summer evenings, and sometimes spent many hours sitting in a bower of the pleasant garden, while I saw the happy children playing about me, among whom were two little girls of my own, who now are rejoicing in the dwellings of everlasting bliss."

Here the lady of the manor paused a moment, evidently under the constraint of a slight emotion; but soon recovering herself, she proceeded—"It was impossible for me to behold so much harmony and love, so much activity, modesty, obedience, and cheerfulness, in this little society, without feeling an unspeakable gratification. It is seldom that I think it right to use very strong expressions of approbation when speaking of my fellow-creatures, since unqualified praise is due only to the Almighty, as the great First Cause and Author of all good. Nevertheless, I was one day so much delighted

with what I saw in this family, that I could not help expressing my extraordinary satisfaction to the second sister, as we sat working together in the parlour.

“In reply to this, she answered, ‘Whatever meets with your approbation in this family must be attributed, under the divine blessing, to our eldest sister, whose holy charity and truly Christian gentleness enabled her successfully to disseminate through this little society those precious doctrines of the Word which have produced the effect you so greatly admire.’ She then entered into a little explanation of their outset in the way of life in which I had become acquainted with them. She informed me, that when their little seminary was first opened, her elder sister being then absent, the control of the family was in her own hands. She owned, that she had at that time no knowledge of the doctrines of the Gospel, and that her religion was entirely legal; insomuch that she was for working out her own salvation by good deeds, and compelling others by the terrors of the law to endeavour to do the same. ‘I have naturally,’ said she, ‘a high spirit, and am of a firm and decided temper; you may therefore suppose that the poor children who were under my charge met with no mercy when they did wrong. Every misdemeanor that came within my view, or the knowledge of which I could by any means obtain, I punished with the most exact justice, being determined to pursue offences of every kind with rigour, till sin, as I hoped, should be banished the house. But what were the consequences of this conduct? My untempered justice, although it checked some open and flagrant acts of evil, excited such a spirit among my pupils, as would effectually have put an end to all hope of my usefulness. Sin was committed as frequently as before, but with more caution; and if it forsook one form, when opposed, it instantly assumed another. I laboured to advance that which was right, but made no progress. Frequent tumults and partial rebellions arose in the family; and I could not but observe that when by some severe punishment I had excited the angry passions of one child, others would seem to be infected with the same feelings, till the whole house appeared, as it were, at once and in a moment to be all agitated by one and the same evil spirit.

“ ‘Though amazed at the ill effects of my own efforts, yet I felt that sin was not to be allowed in my neighbour ; and therefore I continued to visit every breach of the law on my little rebels with unabating strictness but without the smallest apparent benefit, till the arrival of my sister, who had been residing for some time in a truly pious family. This happened just at the crisis when the poor children were duly prepared by the terrors of my government to enjoy the sweet influence of her gentle manners, and to profit by the truly evangelical modes of instruction which she adopted. As the traveller in the parable would not have rejoiced in the healing balsam administered by the good Samaritan, had he not first fallen among thieves and been wounded ; so the poor children, humanly speaking, would not have reaped any lasting benefit from my sister’s mild instructions, had they not groaned for a time under my severer discipline.

“ ‘ I soon made my sister,’ continued the young lady, ‘ acquainted with the situation of the family. Upon which she immediately pointed out to me the error of my management, making me sensible that the heart of man can never be kindly influenced or amended by the terrors of the law ; and that, although correction must be used at times, it should only be employed as a means to lower man’s lofty thoughts, and prepare him for the reception of divine truth. She then intimated, that she could never hope to see an improvement in the state of the children, until Christian principles should begin to operate among them ; adding that, although faith was the gift of God, and therefore could not be imparted by any human means, she felt it an indispensable duty to use such means as were in our power for the purpose of facilitating so blessed an acquisition.

“ ‘ My sister,’ continued she, ‘ immediately began to act upon these views so perfectly new to me. She endeavoured to make the children acquainted with the Christian religion, taught them to understand wherefore they were unable to do well, and where they were to seek assistance for that purpose. And from that time the system of correction, though not wholly interdicted, was much seldomer resorted to in the house : and such now is the general influence of religion in the family, that there are several individuals among the young people

with whom we have never found reason to adopt any other methods of treatment than those of the gentlest kind.’”

Here the lady of the manor, having concluded her little story, added, “My dear young friends, in this little anecdote which I have just related, you will perceive the different effects of the Law and of the Gospel on the human mind, and how entirely ineffectual the law must needs be in changing the heart. But since I shall have occasion frequently to recur to this subject in our consideration of the Commandments, I will now proceed to the next clause in the Church Catechism; and for this purpose shall request you, Miss Sophia, to answer the following question.—‘Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe and to do as they have promised for thee?’”

In reply to this question, Miss Sophia repeated these words—“‘Yes, verily; and by God’s help so I will. And I heartily thank our heavenly Father that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And I pray unto God to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life’s end.’”

“It was my intention, my dear young people,” resumed the lady of the manor, as soon as Miss Sophia had finished all she had to say, “when I undertook my present engagement, to present you with a course of instruction upon all the most important parts of our holy religion; and also to direct your judgments, as far as in me lay, with respect to many of those lesser matters which fall peculiarly within the province of women in your rank of life. It might indeed be said, that I am not fit for so large and important an undertaking. I grant this: I own myself to be utterly incapable and unworthy of such an employment: but after being urged to this work, and made to feel that I ought to attempt it, I was enabled also to trust that strength would be given me from on high to perform the duty assigned me. I remembered on this occasion the words of the promise—*As thy days, so shall thy strength be*, (Deut. xxxiii. 25,) and acting conscientiously upon this principle, I have hitherto found the requisite assistance. I now, however, am entering on a point at once so delicate and of so much importance—a point on which it is absolutely ne-

cessary to open your minds, and yet, one in which the slightest error or misstatement might have the most injurious effect, that I feel more than ever the need of divine assistance, lest I should *darken counsel by words without knowledge*. (Job xxxviii. 2.)

“In that part of our Catechism,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “which we have chosen for our consideration this evening, supposing ourselves to be believers, we thank our heavenly Father that he hath called us to a state of salvation, through Jesus Christ our Saviour. And we pray unto God to give us his grace that we may continue in the same unto the end of our lives.

“Now,” said the lady of the manor, “in these few words we find, in a concise form, an acknowledgment of that doctrine which is stated more largely and plainly in the seventeenth Article of our Church. This Article, which treats of predestination and election, is thus worded.—‘Predestination to life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God be called according to God’s purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God’s mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity. As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God: so, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God’s Predestination, is a most

dangerous downfall, whereby the devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into wretchlessness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation. Furthermore, we must receive God's promises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us in holy Scripture: and, in our doings, that will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the word of God.' (*17th Article of the Church of England.*)

"From this Article of Predestination," continued the lady of the manor, "it appears that those who are to be saved were chosen before the foundation of the world, to be delivered from curse and damnation, and to be brought by Christ to everlasting honour. It also appears, that they are called according to God's purpose by his Holy Spirit; and that through grace obeying the call, and being made sons of God by adoption, they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, attain to everlasting felicity.

"Thus it appears, that there is but one way in which fallen and sinful man can be accepted with God, and justified before him, and that is entirely of grace, through the perfect atonement of Christ alone, and not through the merits or deservings of the person saved, or through any good works which he has been enabled to perform either before or after his calling. For our Church expressly decides upon these different sorts of works, in her separate articles, and declares her opinion that neither the one nor the other can have any influence in procuring man's justification in the eyes of God. Hence man is left utterly without any cause of boasting; and thus, as a celebrated writer on this subject states the case, 'the most shining deeds and valuable qualities that can be found among men, though highly useful, and truly excellent, when set in their proper places, and referred to suitable ends, are, as to the grand article of justification, treated as nonentities.' In this respect, the most zealous professor, with all his laboured performances, stands on a level with the most profane; the apostolic truth addressing all to whom it comes, as guilty, condemned, perishing wretches, leaving no room for preference or boasting, that so the whole glory of our salvation may be secured to that grace which is infinitely rich and absolutely free."

“I think I have now formed some slight idea, my dear Madam,” said one of the young ladies, “of that great scheme of salvation which this article exhibits, and I perceive in some measure how the salvation of many poor, miserable, and weak sinners is secured to them by this divine arrangement: but if such a question is not presumptuous, may I venture to ask, as all men are equally sinful by nature, and equally guilty in the eyes of God, wherefore all are not predestinated to everlasting happiness?”

“I am not sorry that you have put this question,” said the lady of the manor, “as it contains a difficulty which might hereafter be brought forward to perplex you: but the true state of the case is, that we have no right to ask the question. Of this we are assured, that the Lord will never reject any one who comes to him, because it is written, *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out.* (John vi. 37.) Thus are we assured that if we are brought to seek Christ, he will by no means reject us; this is enough for us as individuals, and sufficient also for us in all our concerns with our fellow-creatures. As to the rest, we are bound to receive the words of Scripture in silence and submission; and it is wisely remarked by Mr. Milner, in his Church History, that ‘the common rock on which all heretics have split, is a desire to explain by our reason, the modes of things which we are required to believe on divine testimony only.’

“No doubt,” continued the lady of the manor, “as much light has been given to us as is necessary for us: but I think it important to point out especially to young people, that there are many subjects relative to the divine government of the universe, on which we cannot form an opinion, and for which, perhaps, with the utmost light which could be given us, our present faculties are not adequate. Nay, could it be supposed that we possessed faculties which might render us capable of forming an opinion of the divine government of the universe,” continued the lady of the manor, “do we not want that knowledge of facts with reference to this subject, without which no judgment can be formed on any, even the commonest, subject in ordinary life.

“There are many circumstances,” proceeded she, “at-

tending the state of man upon earth, evidently connected with events which took place before the foundation of the world. Now suppose that any one was to attempt to make a child of four years old understand the debates in a London newspaper—I should conceive that no means which could possibly be used would succeed in making such child comprehend the full meaning of one single speech so reported. And yet this child approaches, in point of intellect, in a considerable degree nearer to the first politician in the House of Commons, than we do to the meanest being without sin. For the effect of sin, in clouding the mind and intellect, is inconceivably great, as I hope to have an opportunity of stating to you on another occasion, from a very valuable old writer upon the subject.

“If, therefore,” proceeded she, “it would be utterly impossible to make a child of four years old form any proper judgment of a speech in parliament, how, I ask, can we be supposed able to reason justly upon what is proper in the government of the universe? As I before said, our minds are sufficiently enlightened on all points which concern our salvation: but when we attempt to reason on subjects which do not belong to us, we are immediately lost, and run ourselves into difficulties which sometimes end in absolute infidelity. But in order to state our doctrines and our difficulties in the plainest language, I must premise, that it is understood by all Christians, that there is one almighty God, who made all things; and that in this God there are three equal persons. Moreover, we understand, that this God is a perfect Being, and of course without sin, because sin is an imperfection; we know also that God made the world, and are assured, that, as he is a perfectly holy Being, the creatures which he made must have come out of his hands without sin.

“Whence then did sin arise? I do not ask,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “how it came into the world; for this we all know. But how did it insinuate itself into the creation? or who first conceived it? If you answer, The fallen angels first conceived it—you only remove the difficulty a little further back. Were not the angels holy creatures, living in heaven in the presence of their Maker? How then did they first ad-

mit sin into their nature? This is a point too mysterious to be comprehended. If then at first setting out we meet with so mighty a difficulty as this, we may be sure that it is impossible for us to understand all the further complicate dealings of God with his creatures. Hence, from all I have said, it appears that our views are so short, our intellects so narrow, our perceptions so obscure, and our absolute knowledge of facts as they refer to the concerns of the universe so bounded, that we cannot judge why it is proper to do one thing, or why it is proper to leave another thing undone.

“It is generally acknowledged, that a mother may often find it necessary to correct a child under three years of age; but it would be impossible, absolutely impossible, to make that child distinctly understand her reasons for so doing. Nevertheless, I venture to assert, that we know enough of the Lord our God, especially of his love and tenderness for his creatures, to believe that whatever he doth is for the advancement of his own glory; and if for the advancement of his own glory, surely it must also be for the good and happiness of his creatures—since man is never miserable but when he departs from God, and seeks the glory of the creature instead of the Creator.

“It cannot therefore be questioned, upon all these considerations, that our wisdom consists in taking the words of Scripture on this subject in their obvious and literal sense: and if the danger of the thoughtless multitude hang heavy on our minds, let us labour to arouse and awaken as many of them as fall within the range of our influence to a due regard for the concerns of their own souls. The Lord works by means; and if haply he should condescend to use any one of us as the instrument of bringing some of his creatures nearer to himself, we shall have abundant reason to glorify his name on that account.”

“But,” said one of the young ladies, “when we look at the number of persons who live altogether in sin, it is surely dreadful to think how few appear to be in the right way, or are likely to be saved!”

“Indeed,” said the lady of the manor, “it is a subject of melancholy reflection that we see so few persons, in comparison of the multitude of grown men and women,

whom we can reasonably suppose to be in the right way. How few do we see who boldly come forward in the service of God ! Where is the man who separates himself from the world ?—who joins himself to Christ, and proves, by his holy conversation, that he is an adopted child of God ? How small, in comparison of the multitude, are the characters which answer to this description ! Is not the glory of Jacob become dim, and the fatness of his flesh waxed lean ?—There are, indeed, a few gleanings left in the visible Church, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries on the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof. (*Isaiah* xvii. 4, 6.)

“ But,” continued she, “ there is a description of persons numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand of the sea—a description of persons unspeakably dear to bereaved mothers, yea, and infinitely dear to him who said, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of God ;* (Mark x. 14 ;) who having been early removed from this world of sin and sorrow, not having as yet committed actual sin, are undoubtedly saved, inasmuch as that stain and pollution of nature which they received from their father Adam is not laid to their account, through the infinite merits of Christ the second Adam. Clothed in his imputed righteousness, these souls are presented with acceptance before the throne of God, and will to all eternity magnify the effects of that free grace by which they were fore-ordained to triumph over sin and death.”

“ It is a sweet thought,” said Sophia, who had some years ago followed a dear little brother to the grave, “ to think that all those little creatures who die in infancy are saved ; and that happiness is thus secured to so many who might otherwise perhaps have destroyed themselves by sin.”

“ I think I have heard,” said the lady of the manor, “ that at least one third of the human race die before they are two years old. So that the happiness of one third of the children of Adam is thus effectually secured ; a reflection full of unutterable comfort and sweetness to those parents who are early deprived of the smiles of their infants. Furthermore, perceiving in the case of children dying early and received into glory, that their

salvation must needs be effected by the eternal and absolutely free favour of God, as procured for us by the merits and death of our Saviour—we necessarily arrive at the solid conclusion that these souls were fore-ordained to glory before the foundation of the world. Now it is evident, and must be universally allowed, that such infants can have done nothing in order to promote their own salvation, and that therefore they are saved through the free mercy of God—notwithstanding which, we cannot apply this doctrine to our own cases, nor be content to enter heaven as little children; but we almost universally fall into the error of supposing that we must do something in order to promote this great work, and so are perpetually endeavouring to bring some good action or other to account, in order to counterbalance the great sum of our unworthiness.

“It is astonishing,” continued the lady of the manor, “what enmity the human mind has to the doctrine of salvation through Christ alone!” She then proceeded to give the young people a short account of the nature and signification of grace, as well as of the manner in which its sovereignty is manifested in our election, in our calling, pardon, justification, adoption, sanctification, and preservation until the end. She first stated that the word *grace* signifies free and undeserved favour and kindness, exhibited in cases where no claim can be preferred, and where no worthiness is apparent—even that free and eternal love and favour of God, which is the secret and inexhaustible source of all the benefits which we receive from him.

“Grace,” continued the lady of the manor, “is that ample and unlimited measure by which the Lord deals with those who are unworthy; therefore, those who are sinners, and those only, are the objects of grace. And this,” continued she, “if properly understood, will explain to us the words of St. Paul—*Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt, (Rom. iv. 4.) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephes. ii. 8, 9.) If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.*” (Rom. xi. 6.)

One of the young ladies then said, “We are to un-

derstand that grace is the free favour of God, by which he bestows his blessings upon unworthy persons?"

"Yes," said the lady of the manor. "I believe you now comprehend the meaning of the word: but I wish you to understand also, that the grace of which we speak is eternal and unchangeable in its nature; and that it was the original mover in our salvation, which must ever be considered as wholly flowing from the free and unmerited love of God."

"I think now," said one of the young ladies, "that I begin to have some little idea of the meaning of those verses in the Epistles on the subject of grace and works, some of which have been quoted on the present occasion; and which I have hitherto considered so difficult, that I have, I fear, never tried to understand them. Grace is the free and eternal love of God, and this grace has supplied the means of salvation: we are therefore to receive this salvation as a free gift, of which we are quite unworthy; while we abhor the thought of supposing that we ever have done, or ever can do, any thing to deserve this great salvation."

"Moreover," replied the lady of the manor, "you must understand, that the only real objects of grace are such as feel and acknowledge their own unworthiness. If therefore we endeavour to make ourselves worthy before we seek for grace, or independently of its influence, we render ourselves incapable of it."

"Well," said Miss Emmeline, "this is a very hard doctrine, and very wounding to our pride; for we find by it, that if we would be saved, we must cast away all our good works, and all our merits, and put ourselves on a level with the thief on the cross, and the woman who bathed our Saviour's feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair."

"And were we to throw our good works utterly away," said the lady of the manor, smiling, "we should subject ourselves to no great loss, I believe, Miss Emmeline; since were they ten thousand times better than they are, they would be but filthy garments compared with that robe of righteousness with which we may hope through divine grace to be clad."

The lady of the manor then proceeded to point out how grace might properly be said to reign throughout

the whole wonderful process of man's salvation—in his election, his calling, his pardon, his justification, his adoption, his sanctification, and his perseverance to the end. And as these words were more or less unintelligible to the young people, she endeavoured as much as lay in her power to bring them down to their comprehension.

“ ‘ *Election, or predestination to life,* ’ ” said the lady of the manor, speaking from the Article which had been before quoted, “ ‘ is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his own counsel, secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour.’ ”

“ *Calling,* ” proceeded the lady of the manor, “ is that important change which takes place in the mind and views of a sinner when converted to Christ. *Election*, it is supposed, makes no real change in the state of its object; so that the chosen person often remains in an unconverted state to an advanced period of life, as may be proved from the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. But when the time of conversion comes, the Spirit of God speaks to the soul, and awakens it as from the dead. Various are the means employed for the conversion of sinners; but whatever the outward means may be, the work is that of the Holy Spirit, and is generally effected through the instrumentality of the written and preached word of God.

“ I could say much, ” continued the lady of the manor, “ upon this subject; but as I shall have occasion to enlarge further upon it hereafter, I shall now forbear, and proceed to say—That *pardon of sin* is a blessing of inestimable value, which we also receive from divine grace. It is that which is absolutely necessary to the present peace and future happiness of the sinful race of Adam; and this pardon can only be obtained through Christ our Saviour. On this point the Articles of our Church hold the following language—‘ They also are to be accursed, that presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and

the light of nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ whereby men must be saved.' (18th Article of the Church of England.)

"Justification is also defined in our Articles; and as I must hereafter enter more largely into this subject, I think I shall content myself in this place with giving you the excellent words of the Article itself.—'We are accounted righteous before God only by the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith; and not for our own works and deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification.' (11th Article.)

"Adoption," proceeded the lady of the manor, "is also a subject on which I must hereafter enlarge; I shall therefore at this time merely present you with a concise statement of the doctrine; and this I shall do in the words of a celebrated author on these subjects.—'Adoption signifies that act by which a person takes the child of another, not related to him, into the place, and entitles him to all the privileges, of his own son. And that spiritual and divine adoption about which we treat, is God's gracious admission of strangers and aliens into the state of relation and enjoyment of all the privileges of children, through Jesus Christ; according to that glorious promise of the new covenant—I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.'

"Sanctification is that change of heart whereby we are made new creatures; it is that operation by which a sinner is cleansed from the pollution and filth of sin, made free from its power and dominion, and endued with a principle of holiness. Thus God by his Spirit in due time sanctifies those whom he has chosen.

"And finally, to speak of that crowning work of grace, whereby it enables poor weak and miserable mortals to persevere in the right way unto the end—we find from Scripture, that the Lord hath engaged himself in the behalf of those whom he hath begotten again to a lively hope, that he will keep them stedfast unto the end. It is very certain, that if God were suddenly to withdraw his help from the individual (whomsoever he may be)

who is most advanced in the heavenly course, that man would certainly fall. Wherefore, unless we had the assurance that God would never forsake his people, we could have no hope of attaining the unknown felicities of everlasting life. But there are many texts of Scripture which give us this assurance; and the promises of God, those exceeding great and precious promises which are scattered in rich abundance through every part of the Bible, afford every believer the strongest possible consolation respecting this matter. Some of the sweetest among a countless number of passages to this purpose addressed to the elect are the following—*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Rom. viii. 38, 39.)—*Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" (1 Peter i. 1—5.)

After the lady of the manor had ceased to speak, the young ladies remained silent for a few minutes. At length one of them ventured to say, that she had heard some people object to the doctrine of predestination, on account of its tendency to produce *pride* in such individuals as might have the arrogance to suppose themselves of the number of the elect, and to generate *despair* in others who might think themselves in the opposite condition.

"My dear young friend," said the lady of the manor, "whatever is found in Scripture is written for our learning, and consequently whatever is there revealed concerning God is no doubt revealed for our good. We

may safely leave it with God to honour his own word ; and he has done it, and will do it to the end. And it is remarkable, that God hath been pleased in all ages especially to honour this doctrine of election and free grace, although it is certainly possible that ill-designing persons may wrest these doctrines to evil purposes ; because such is the depravity of our nature, that there is no doctrine, however pure, which we are not sometimes inclined to pervert. But I think it would not be hard to prove that there are more immoral men among those who maintain the contrary opinion, that works have some share in man's salvation ; than among those who maintain the Scriptural doctrine of free grace."

"But surely, Madam," said Miss Emmeline, "we are not to understand that any unholy person, that is, a person given to evil works, can properly be called an heir of the kingdom of heaven?"

"It is possible," replied the lady of the manor, "for a man now living in sin, and greedily committing evil works, to be one of the elect or chosen ; for St. Paul was one of the elect while yet engaged in persecuting the servants of God, and compelling them to blaspheme. But grace had then only selected him as an object of mercy through Christ ; he had not yet been called, pardoned, justified, adopted, or sanctified : therefore no man in his senses would at that time have called him a chosen vessel of mercy. Works are then to be considered as the only proper evidences of the call of an individual ; for the tree is known by its fruits.

"But," proceeded the lady of the manor, "inasmuch as I have detained your attention for a long time on a very serious subject, I shall now endeavour to entertain you with a little narrative which is not altogether irrelevant to the points in question."

The lady of the manor then unfolding a little manuscript, read as follows.—

The History of Mrs. Howard ; related by herself.

"I shall not begin my history, as is commonly done, with an apology for intruding the affairs of a private person on the attention of the public ; because I wish it to be understood, that my object in troubling the

world with my concerns is the desire of rendering myself useful to such persons as may labour under the same illusions as I did during the greater part of a long life.

“I am the daughter of a dignified clergyman of the Church of England, and was married early in life to an elderly gentleman of the name of Howard, a person of considerable property. While yet under thirty, I was left a widow with one daughter, who was heiress of her father's large property, subject to no other incumbrance than my jointure, which was to be sure an exceedingly handsome one, though not unsuitable to the family circumstances.

“It may readily be supposed, that a young widow so circumstanced, and one who was not disagreeable in her person, should have many temptations to enter a second time into the state of matrimony. But having conceived a dishonourable idea of second marriages, I adhered to the resolution I had formed during the first weeks of my widowhood of never marrying again. No one certainly could blame me for this decision. I was at liberty to do as I chose; and had I chosen to do otherwise, I should not have done amiss, if my choice of a second husband had fallen upon a worthy person. But be this as it may; I remember that I built much in my own favour upon the resolution which I had taken and so scrupulously adhered to, laying this as a kind of foundation of the character which I afterwards chose to appropriate to myself, viz. that of a woman of strict piety and exalted morals.

“I now proceed to state precisely what my ideas of piety then were. They consisted in a close compliance with all the appointed forms of the Church of England. Of its doctrines I say nothing, because I did not at that time comprehend them; but I held a kind of confused opinion that I was to do what was right as far as I could, and trust to Christ to make up my short comings. I entertained no suspicion whatever that any distinction was to be made between the commands delivered in the Word of God, and the ordinances of man: and, in consequence, the opinions of any man of rank in my own Church had as much weight with me as the words of the Bible. For though I often heard and read the words of Scripture, I heard and read them entirely as matters

of course, constantly interpreting them to my own fancy, and agreeably to certain preconceived notions; without ever seriously reflecting upon them, or employing my understanding in ascertaining their real import. I was, in fact, though a member of one of the purest establishments upon earth, little less than a downright Papist, submitting my will to *human* rather than *divine* authority: so that the Bible was, in fact, almost as entirely a sealed book to me, as it is to the man who never hears it read in a known language.

“Neither was I any better informed respecting the spiritual meaning of the Liturgy of our Church. I had not the smallest conception that it had been prepared for a description of persons with whom I had at that time not one feeling in common; and, in consequence, I applied without reserve all the passages which are there put in the mouth of the broken-hearted sinner, or the regenerated and sanctified person, to my own peculiar case, although I scarcely had ever heard of conviction of sin, and should not have scrupled to assert that regeneration and sanctification were words without meaning, or merely the inventions of fanaticism. Thus, although my case was not quite so singular a one, it in some respects resembled that of the Oxford scholar who is said to have appropriated to himself the honours intended for the heir-apparent of the crown, in whose train he once happened to enter the theatre. But religious appropriations of this kind are, I fear, too common, and are no doubt made by all those persons who cannot distinguish between the visible and invisible Church, not understanding that multitudes perpetually creep into the former who have no place in the latter, and that, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of pious ministers to separate the tares from the wheat, they will be found growing together until the harvest.

“I am, however, anxious, from my own experience, to give others a clue to the intricate and dark corners of their own hearts, that I may thereby induce them, with the divine blessing, to enquire seriously *within* whether they are truly entitled, as feeling their own utter depravity and helplessness, to adopt the language of the liturgy, and to appropriate to themselves the various consolatory expressions it holds out to those who have

been brought to see their need of a Saviour. But to leave these matters for the present, and proceed with my narrative—

“After my husband’s death, I settled in one of his country-houses, which, with an estate surrounding it, was part of my jointure, and there I resided till my daughter was of age to be introduced into the world. This house had been built about the time of King William, when the Dutch taste prevailed. It was a square building; the front opening upon a garden laid out in the same style with the house, into which there was a descent by high flights of steps. In this garden every thing was uniform, grove nodding at grove, and every alley being provided with a brother. Here I had a favourite room, opening with folding-doors into the garden, from whence I had a view of two square pools, or tanks, one beyond the other, flanked on each side by groves of Linden trees, through which avenues were cut in various directions; the whole scene being terminated by a Chinese temple.

“The room itself was hung with blue damask, with curtains and sofas of the same; and the oaken floor was polished bright as a mirror. In this apartment, where was a harpsichord and some few books, I might be seen every morning employed with my needle; for I was exceedingly fond of fine work, and while so engaged I had opportunity of observing those persons who were employed to instruct my daughter Lydia, whom I was anxious to bring up in the strictest manner according to my own views of propriety.

“In those days, accomplished female teachers were not to be met with. I was therefore obliged to be contented with a young woman as a governess for Lydia of very inferior qualifications. But in order to make up the deficiencies of this teacher, I procured the assistance of a young clergyman, the curate of the parish, who being, though a gentleman in the best acceptance of the term, in humble circumstances, and under some obligations to the family, was not sorry to undertake the office of instructing my little girl. To this young man, therefore, whom I shall call Berrington, the cultivation of my daughter’s mind was submitted, subject to my directions and control.

“Having thus arranged my establishment, I spent some years without experiencing any very great or remarkable change of circumstances. In the mean time, the idea was established in my own mind, that I was a decided character with regard to religion, most admirably qualified as a mother and the head of a large family, as well as highly to be commended, with respect to my principles, as a member of the Established Church. Under the influence of this illusion, and not being exercised by any searching providence, I vainly proceeded in my own strength, looking proudly down on all about me, without ever once supposing it possible that I should be at that very time in a spiritual sense, *poor*, and *blind*, and *naked*, and *miserable*.

“All this while, in my supposed character of an accomplished member of the Church of England, I appeared on every occasion of divine service in the large family pew, which was richly lined with crimson cloth, handsomely furnished with elegant chairs, and duly set forth with quarto Prayer-Books in red morocco, having the armorial bearings of the Howards impressed on their covers. Thus seated in my station of dignity, and filled with such sentiments of my own worth and consequence as above described, I repeated without hesitation the various penitentiary passages of our Liturgy with the most entire self-complacency, it never happening to occur to me that I had at no time turned away from my wickedness, and that therefore I could with no sort of propriety use even the first clause of the service. As to the confession of sins, which immediately follows the address of the minister to his people, in my own opinion I was by no means wanting in my duty there; for I always made a point of repeating it aloud, and in a kind of melancholy and emphatic tone which I conceived might be very edifying to my servants and dependents, who formed the larger part of the congregation. I also made my responses in the Litany and the Communion Service with equal emphasis; in addition to which I was always seen on my knees rather a longer time than ordinary after the blessing was pronounced. I was moreover a constant attendant at the communion table, and observed the festivals with great regularity. I felt likewise a superstitious respect for the more minute ceremonial

parts of our religious establishment; insomuch that I was not only greatly scandalized one Sunday when our vicar had forgotten his band, but I even presumed to set down an old lady of quality as a decided infidel, for saying that she was not fond of the sound of bells. Thus I confounded, in the same disorganized mass of childish ideas, the essentials and non-essentials of religion, being utterly incapable of distinguishing one from the other; because at that time I was destitute of the clew by which true believers are readily conducted through that labyrinth of human opinions, in which the mere formalist finds himself so perplexed that he not seldom stands quite still in the spot wherein he happens to find himself when he first begins to reflect, determining there to maintain his station in spite of all the arguments and representations by which he may be assailed. But no more of this at present.

“I shall now proceed to speak of one whose character was as directly the reverse of mine as it is possible to suppose any character could be. This was my daughter, the lovely Lydia Howard, as she was not seldom called in the higher circles to which she was introduced when at a proper age. Even in very early infancy this child was remarkably beautiful; and her beauty was of so delicate and modest a description, that the longer it was looked upon the more admirable it appeared. She was exceedingly fair, and generally pale; but when in the smallest degree excited, a delicate blush mantled in her cheek, and added new perfections to her charming countenance. She was naturally reserved and timid; and under a mother such as I have described myself to be, her character had no opportunity of unfolding itself to those about her. Therefore, during the earlier period of her life, little more could be said of her than that she was entirely inoffensive. Sometimes indeed, and for a few minutes, her natural sensibility and warmth of feeling would appear, as I once especially remember on the death of an infant in whom she had taken great interest, whose little grave I accidentally heard her address with a tenderness and pathos which at once discovered the strength of her feelings and the elegance of her mind.

“This my dear child was about ten years of age when Mr. Berrington was established in his office as her tu-

tor. Mr. Berrington at that time had just entered into deacon's-orders, having obtained extraordinary honours at the University, and being equally distinguished by the politeness of his manners and the agreeableness of his conversation.

“I was by no means myself a cultivated woman; nevertheless I had some idea of the distinction which a cultivated mind gives to an elegant young woman. I therefore requested Mr. Berrington to communicate to my daughter every possible advantage of this kind: and indeed I myself in general very officiously presided on these occasions, not seldom, as I have since thought, interrupting him with many impertinences.

“The instructions which Mr. Berrington gave his little pupil were, no doubt, excellent, if I may judge by their effect on her mind. He taught her to read French and Italian, with which languages he was well acquainted; and as much Greek as enabled her to read the New Testament in the original with facility. He made her acquainted with history, both sacred and profane; and taught her to write elegantly. These were the leading points of his instructions; and though he seldom gave her a lesson expressly upon religion, which he had, no doubt, some reasons for not doing, yet he so insensibly blended Christianity with all his instructions, that he had formed her principles relative to these matters, at a time when I had reason to suppose her nearly ignorant of any thing but the outward forms and general outlines of the Christian religion.

“I have before mentioned that I was a great observer of forms; accordingly, when Lydia was between fourteen and fifteen, thinking it right that she should be confirmed, I wrote to a relation of my late husband, who was high in the Church, for the purpose of consulting him upon the subject.

“He replied, that the young lady having attained the age appointed by the Church for such ordinance, there could be no doubt that it ought now to be attended to; but that the young lady should previously be examined in the Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Ten Commandments, as the Church required.

“Having received this letter, I, who always did every thing with much ceremony, caused Mr. Berrington to be

sent for, and taking him into my dressing-room, delivered my opinion to him at some length, enlarging, no doubt, upon the obligation under which all parents lie of bringing their children at a due age to be confirmed. I then read my friend's letter to him, and requested, or rather, laid my commands upon him, to prepare my daughter for the ceremony.

“Mr. Berrington, who I have much reason to suppose bore my frequent insolence entirely on account of the regard he had for his pupil, promised to obey my commands, and immediately began the work of preparation.

“It happened, during the few first days of these examinations, that I was unable to be present, being engaged by a visitor of high rank, to whom I thought particular attention was due, this lady being no other than a dowager duchess, of whom I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter. However, as it never suited my ideas of propriety to leave Mr. Berrington alone with my daughter, I ordered Miss Chelmsford, my Lydia's governess, to attend at these seasons; while, to maintain the character of a very watchful and prudent mother, I thought it necessary, after the first examination, to question her on what she had heard Mr. Berrington say to my daughter.

“‘I did not hear any thing about the Creed, Madam, or the Lord's Prayer,’ she replied. ‘On the contrary, Mr. Berrington ran as far from these subjects as he well could, and spoke of things which had happened before the beginning of the world.’

“‘Extraordinary!’ I said. ‘What can you mean?’

“In reply to this, she blundered and stammered, making every thing she endeavoured to explain appear totally ridiculous, as uneducated persons are apt to do when meddling with what they do not understand: so I dismissed her with a charge to be more attentive another day.

“Miss Chelmsford's next report was more consistent; and as she was assisted by certain Articles of the Church to which Mr. Berrington had made a reference, I was led to comprehend, that the young divine was instructing my daughter on the alarming points of *election*, of *grace*, of the *depravity of man's nature*, and the *necessity of regeneration*. As excellent a Church-woman as I sup-

posed myself to be, the Articles of the Church itself were not sufficient to reconcile me to these doctrines. However, as the duchess was to leave me the next day, I resolved to conceal my uneasy feelings, and succeeded so far as to appear all composure till I saw her Grace's carriage drive from the door. I then hastened to the room where Mr. Berrington was with Lydia, and there seated myself at the table, with my knotting-shuttle in my hand, quietly waiting till I should hear something at which I might take offence.

“Mr. Berrington had a Book of Common Prayer in his hand, and the first expression I heard him use was to this effect:—‘All the prayers and services in this book, you must observe, Miss Howard, are intended for the use of those persons who, according to the words of our Articles, “having been called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season, have, through grace, obeyed the call and been justified freely”—persons who, knowing themselves to be sinners, have seen the need of an entire change of heart; who having cast away all self-confidence, and placing their whole trust in the merits of Christ, are enabled to use with the heart, as well as the tongue, the language of the Church, confessing themselves miserable sinners, and appropriating to themselves all the comfortable promises and assurances of salvation interspersed throughout our Liturgy.

“‘The language of our Common Prayer-Book,’ continued Mr. Berrington, ‘is the proper language of the children of God. The ordinances of religion are intended for their comfort only; and that peculiar service on which we are meditating, may, from its very name, be understood only as an office for strengthening and confirming those who are already in the right way. The proper preparation therefore for confirmation, should consist in a serious examination of our actual state, especially as it regards the following points: viz. whether we have already been called to Christ by the power of the Holy Ghost; whether we are regenerated, or have received a new nature; and whether by our holy lives we give the requisite proofs of this our renewal unto holiness.’

“‘Amazing, Mr. Berrington!’ I said in the plenitude

of my folly ; ‘ did any one ever hear such sentiments as you have just uttered ? ’

“ ‘ Madam,’ said he, with his usual composure, ‘ I have said nothing but what our Liturgy and Articles will fully confirm.’

“ ‘ Will they,’ said I, ‘ confirm your assertion, that none but the saints, the converted, and the pious, have any business at church ? ’

“ Mr. Berrington pleaded, that he had made no such assertion ; but had simply said, that, as the prayers of the Church, and its other forms, speak the language of converted men, those who are not so should be informed of this circumstance, lest, by a confident application of the promises contained in that ritual, they should thereby appropriate to themselves those consolations which belong not to their condition.

“ ‘ And pray, Sir,’ asked I, ‘ who is to judge what individuals in a congregation are fit to apply these consolations to themselves, and who are not ? ’

“ ‘ No man,’ replied Mr. Berrington, ‘ is competent to form this judgment ; and of this our reformers were so fully aware, that they prepared their Liturgy under the supposition that all who make a part of the visible Church are members also of the invisible.’

“ ‘ Well, Sir,’ I said, ‘ these opinions are perfectly new to me ; neither do I see the need of troubling my daughter with them at this time.’

“ ‘ Consider, my dear Madam,’ he replied, ‘ that your daughter, being judged by the Church of a proper age to take upon herself her baptismal vow, ought at this time to be led to a serious review of her spiritual state : and inasmuch as I am convinced that many young people have been misled by the very circumstance of their being continually addressed by their ministers in the congregation as believers, I have taken some pains to explain to Miss Howard, that, although the minister is obliged to address her in public, with the rest of his people, as a child of God ;—that although, when baptized, thanksgivings were made on her account in these words ; “ We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate this infant with thy Holy Spirit ; ”—and that although she has been taught to repeat this sentence of the Church Catechism ;

“In my baptism, wherein I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;”—yet, notwithstanding all this, that it is still possible she may be an unchanged character, and no otherwise a Christian than in name and outward circumstances.’

“I was going to speak, and with no small degree of heat and probably of insolence, when Lydia gave me one of those beseeching looks, which, harsh and imperious as I was, I often found irresistible.

“‘Excuse me, Madam,’ said Mr. Berrington, ‘if I may seem to be searching my pupil too deeply. But I ask her no questions; I desire to hear no confessions; I am only anxious to lead her to a close self-examination. The period of confirmation is a golden opportunity held out by the Church to young people for serious consideration, and I am desirous that Miss Howard should make the best of it.’

“I confessed so far, that this ceremony ought not to be passed lightly over, but added, that I did not like the idea of divine calls and vocations; fully convinced that such fancies led to enthusiasm and all manner of absurdities—that I myself had never experienced any thing of the kind—and that I believed the Church had not many more faithful members than myself.

“Mr. Berrington bowed. It was impossible to answer this argument. But I thought Lydia sighed; and firing at this idea, I instantly added, ‘I hope, Mr. Berrington, you have not led my daughter to suppose that no one can be a Christian who has not been miraculously called, by dream, or vision, or some other such conceit.’

“‘By no means, Madam,’ said Mr. Berrington: ‘but I wish Miss Howard to understand, that, if she has not been made sensible of her lost state by nature, of her utter inability to help herself, and of her extreme need of a Saviour, she has not as yet experienced that change which in Scripture is described as a new birth.’

“Another tender glance from Lydia here checked me: but feeling rather angry at being so checked, I suddenly desired Mr. Berrington to return to his usual studies with my daughter, assuring him that enough had been said on these subjects, and that there could be little

doubt of a young person, brought up like Miss Howard, being at all times fit for confirmation.

“From that time, I do not recollect that I had any particular conversation on these subjects with Mr. Ber-rington, who nevertheless, as I before hinted, had the address, during the course of his other instructions, to give my daughter such views of religion as he desired. For, after all, it is not so much long discussions on the doctrines of religion, which form the principles of young people, as the general tendency of their daily instructions; and, on the contrary, evil is often insinuated in the same way, not by formal addresses, but by subtle remarks, made upon such subjects as daily occur: and hence the amazing importance of placing young people under proper instructors.

“I found no difficulty, as I had foreseen, of procuring a ticket entitling my daughter to be confirmed; so having presented her with this token of her proper qualification, I had the pleasure of seeing the Bishop lay his hand upon her head: after which I returned home fully satisfied that every thing regarding this affair had been duly performed.

“Where a mother is extremely busy, clever, and somewhat overbearing, the characters of her children are often not sufficiently understood. A great deal of the art of education consists, I have of late years been persuaded, in gently drawing forth the character under the parent's roof, and encouraging young people to exert their powers while still blessed with a parent's superintendence. My daughter was, however, so remarkably modest and timid; and my manner towards her was so decisive, so distant, and, in a word, so overbearing; that I had little opportunity of knowing her real disposition while she remained under my control. Nevertheless, the modesty and extraordinary unobtrusiveness of her conduct, which were no doubt the effects of grace, could not but strike me, and I was even, at times, angry at seeing her take so little upon herself; not unfrequently saying, ‘Lydia, what will you do when you come to be at the head of a family?—when you go out into the world?—when possessed of your estates? I suppose you will not even choose yourself a carriage, or scarcely a cap, without asking mamma's opinion. Well, when

you are married, I must come and live with you, and help you to manage your table and order your household.' She commonly smiled when thus addressed, and would frequently say, 'I hope you will always find me obedient to your will, my dear Madam, and thankful for your advice.'

"On Lydia's reaching the age of seventeen, she was emancipated from the control of a governess, and it was intended that Mr. Berrington's lessons should then cease: but she made the request that he might still be permitted to direct her studies; which I the rather agreed to, as we lived in great retirement, and his conversation was so agreeable that it would have been a piece of self-denial on my part to have banished him our society.

"On the birth-day subsequent to my daughter's having attained her eighteenth year, she was presented at court, where her appearance produced a sensation even beyond my most sanguine hopes. The consequence of her appearance was, that immediately afterwards I received a visit from my friend the duchess before mentioned, who informed me, that such was the impression Lydia had made on her son, that she believed her perfections were almost sufficiently strong to induce him to think of matrimony, against which he had strenuously declared for some years past.

"I am ashamed to think how much I was elated with the idea which now first suggested itself of seeing my daughter in so elevated a rank, although she were to purchase it by marrying a man who was far from what might be wished in a son-in-law; the nobleman in question being a person of excessive pride, bad morals, and as bad a temper. His mother, however, had long wished him to marry; though it seems that he resisted all her solicitations on this head till he had seen my daughter at court; on which occasion, he told his mother, that if ever he married, it should be to Lydia Howard.

"As soon as the old lady had sounded me on the subject, and found that I should look on the alliance as an honour, she proposed a short visit to me in the country within a few weeks; adding, that she hoped she should have influence enough to bring her son with her.

“This matter being settled, I returned with my daughter to our country habitation, where, to my utter amazement, she appeared presently to have forgotten all she had seen and heard in town, devoting herself again, with renewed ardour, to her former employments; so that, while receiving her instructions from Mr. Berrington, she seemed entirely to have lost sight of all the pageants of the court, and to think only of her music, her pensioners among the poor, her bees, her flowers, and her books. Thus we were situated, when the duchess wrote to inform me that she was actually coming to visit me, and that her son had entered into the proposed scheme with a vivacity which proved that his heart was not wholly unconcerned in the affair.

“When I informed Lydia of our expected visitors, she received the news in a manner which proved to me that she was utterly unsuspicious of the motive of their journey.

“The noble lady and her son arrived on the appointed day, but an hour or two sooner than I expected; and, in consequence, they found me in my favourite parlour, instead of my state drawing-room where I had intended to have received them, surprising us while Mr. Berrington was reading with Lydia.

“I saw the eye of the dowager fixed on Mr. Berrington as soon as she came in; and soon after we were seated, she said apart to me, ‘Who is that fine young man?’

“I had seen Mr. Berrington so frequently, and for so many years, that I had ceased to remark his outward appearance, and had looked upon him with so much contempt as a poor curate, and a kind of dependent on the family, as I chose to consider him, that it had not occurred to me, wise as I thought myself, till the duchess spoke, that there could be any danger in his being so much with my daughter. But on her repeating the question, ‘Who is that young man whom we found seated with you and your daughter?’ I blushed, and said, ‘It is only the curate of the parish.’

“The old lady looked at him again; and, though too polite to add more on the subject, I saw that his presence displeased her. And from that time, certain jealousies arose in my mind respecting Mr. Berrington,

which led me to watch his whole conduct with a degree of keenness which could not have failed of detecting the smallest impropriety towards my daughter, had any such existed.

“In the mean time, Lydia, though without a design or wish so to do, pleased the duke so much, that he no longer hesitated whether he should solicit her hand : and, in consequence, empowered me to break the subject to her, it having been previously arranged that he and his mother should leave us for a few days, in order to give my daughter some time for consideration, though no doubt seemed to be entertained on their part of her prompt and even joyful acquiescence.

“In this respect I was not, however, quite so sanguine as her noble admirer, although I questioned not but that I should have influence enough to bend her will to whatever I might require. Accordingly, immediately after the duchess and her son had taken their departure, I called Lydia into my dressing-room ; and, after some hesitations and circumlocutions, I opened the matter to her. From her frequent changes of colour, she seemed to have understood the affair before I had ceased speaking, but did not interrupt me, nor even answer me for some moments after hearing all I had to say. Then speaking in a hurried manner and with considerable agitation, she besought me not to press this matter any further ; assuring me that she never could love the duke sufficiently to become his wife, though she was grateful for the honour he did her in making her his choice.

“I expected this ; and, therefore, in nowise cast down thereby, I again urged the suit with increased warmth, and at some length.

“She heard me out, and then clasping her hands, ‘Oh ! my mother !’ she said, ‘if you love me, say no more on this subject.’

“I, in return, made her understand that my heart was in the affair, and that I could never give it up. On which, she was thrown into a perfect agony ; and, turning pale as death, she fell at my feet, beseeching me, as I loved her, as I desired not to see her die on the spot, never again to mention to her the name of the man who now sought her hand.

"This strong language, accompanied by actions so affecting, startled me, especially from my hitherto gentle Lydia; and instantly suspecting the truth, I said, 'Lydia, your affections are engaged. You need not, you cannot deny it.'

"On hearing this, a deep blush succeeded her former paleness, and, unused to falsehood, she covered her face with both her hands, and was silent.

"I arose, as she still knelt to me, and moving to the other end of the room, 'You cannot deny the fact, unworthy young creature,' I said; 'and well I know the unprincipled man who has seduced your affections.'

"'No one,' said she, looking up, 'has attempted to win my regards. Heaven is my witness, that not a word, not a look, not an action has been used to that purpose. He has, I am persuaded, never thought of me but as of a child: he has not an idea of my folly.'

"I turned to her hastily, and looking sternly at her, 'Of whom are you speaking, Lydia?' I said.

"She had risen from her knees; and on my putting this question, she started, trembled, and was silent.

"I repeated my question, 'Of whom are you speaking, Lydia?'

"She attempted to reply; but the words dying on her lips, she lifted up her eyes towards heaven, and clasping her hands, seemed to be uttering a prayer.

"Lydia,' I said, 'mock me not with this affectation of piety. Were you really a virtuous and pious young woman, instead of displaying these tragic airs, instead of invoking heaven like a martyr at the stake, you would prepare to obey your mother's commands, and to make her happy with your compliance. But do as you please: nevertheless, be assured of this, that Mr. Berrington shall be made to lament his presumption as long as he lives. I had intended to have served him effectually in his profession; I have indeed taken measures for the purpose, and hoped soon to have emancipated him from his present inferior situation, and seen him in possession of a handsome living: but this is now at an end. The man who has injured me as Mr. Berrington has done, shall never be the better for my exertions.'

"On hearing this, my daughter fell at my feet, and assured me, in a manner the most solemn, that she was

well assured Mr. Berrington had not the slightest idea of her presumptuous preference of him.

“ ‘Then what am I to think of you, Lydia?’

“ ‘She answered, ‘That I have lived with one of the most amiable and excellent of men, till I can endure no other in the comparison.’

“ ‘You are bold, Lydia,’ I said, ‘and are artfully charging me with imprudence for bringing you and the unworthy object of your preference so much together.’

“ ‘Heaven forbid,’ she answered, ‘that I should have such an idea. I blame no one. I have no one to charge with my present misery.’

“ ‘All this is very well, Miss Howard,’ I replied: ‘but of this be assured, that I shall believe nothing of your assertions respecting Mr. Berrington’s innocence, unless you consent to the marriage which I propose.’

“ ‘She shuddered on hearing this; but seeing me determined, her habitual gentleness and obedience prevailed, and she gave her consent, though with an expression of countenance which ought to have taught me how great the sacrifice was which she made. However, being dazzled and blinded by ambition, I wrote instantly to my intended son-in-law, to inform him that I had succeeded in his suit; and at the same time I sent to the vicar to devise some means of sending Mr. Berrington from the country till the marriage should have taken place.

“ ‘The vicar, in whom I found myself obliged to place a partial confidence, promised to endeavour to assist me in this point; and returning home instantly, he speedily sent for Mr. Berrington, having devised some excuse for sending him to a benefice he possessed at some distance. But while these things were in agitation, Mr. Berrington, who little conceived what was passing, arrived by a circuitous way at the hall, and, as his custom was, proceeded to the room where I commonly sat in a morning, and where I had just held a conference with the vicar. He entered with his usual ease, took up a book which was upon the table, and began talking of it; I in the mean time endeavouring to behave to him as usual.

“ ‘We had not been together long, when Lydia came in. She had advanced far into the room before she saw

Mr. Berrington. She then suddenly stopped, and looking at me, she became alternately pale and violently flushed, still standing in the same place whence she had first perceived the presence of her tutor. 'Lydia,' I said, 'come on, my dear: Mr. Berrington and I are not speaking on any particular business.'

"On hearing this, he dropped his book, arose in haste, set her a chair, and placing himself near her, 'Miss Howard,' he said, 'you look ill! my dear Miss Howard, are you not well?'

"His manner was affectionate and tender; but it would have been strange, had he not loved the amiable young creature, who had been so long under his care. She made him no answer; and, notwithstanding my looks of keen reproach, burst into tears and sobbed violently. Mr. Berrington was evidently much distressed, and looked at me for an explanation. 'She is not well, Sir,' I said; 'she has not been well some days.'

"He looked at me, as I thought, with a suspicious air, and then addressed something to Lydia, which, though nothing out of the common way, caused a renewal of her tears. On which, I advised her to leave the room, and endeavour to recover herself; and at the same time ringing for her maid to attend her, I was left alone with Mr. Berrington, who seemed lost in thought, following my daughter with his eyes till she had left the room, and then taking up the book he had thrown down, he remained for a while as if engaged in reading. I was determined, however, to penetrate his thoughts, if possible; and therefore, as soon as I was assured that Lydia was at some distance, I said, 'Mr. Berrington, are you not very much concerned to see Lydia look so ill? If she is not soon better, I shall feel myself under the necessity of procuring for her the best medical advice.'

"On hearing my voice, he threw down the book again, rose up, as if his impatience would not permit him to sit still, and then said, 'I hope nothing makes her unhappy, Madam. Miss Howard appears to me to have something on her mind.' He looked intently upon me, and I thought reproachfully, as he said this; insomuch, that I felt my cheeks flush with indignation. 'Sir,' I replied, 'what leads you to suppose that Lydia is unhappy? what reason have you for such a suspicion?'

“ ‘No other, Madam,’ he calmly answered, ‘but her appearance to-day. And it would be strange indeed, if I, who have studied her character from infancy, could not now read her countenance! Indeed, Mrs. Howard,’ he added, ‘I am persuaded that she is unhappy. Do not let her gentle spirit be afflicted. Few mothers have such a daughter as you possess in Miss Howard, and consequently few mothers can have so much to lose as you would lose in her.’

“ ‘To lose,’ I repeated, ‘Mr. Berrington! Heaven forbid that I should lose my Lydia!’

“ Mr. Berrington sighed. ‘May the Almighty hear your prayer, Madam!’ he answered. But here he stopped, and, wishing me a good day, hastily quitted the room, leaving me with no small increase of unpleasant feelings.

“ Through the management of the vicar, I saw no more of Mr. Berrington, till my Lydia was actually married, and had left the hall with her noble husband and mother-in-law.

“ From the time of her agony of tears in the presence of Mr. Berrington, my unhappy daughter had remained perfectly calm: yet such was her paleness on the morning of her marriage, that Miss Chelmsford would have induced her to put on a little rouge; and I might, perhaps, have insisted on the same, had not I recollected that this artificial bloom would incur the risk of being displaced by her tears. And ought not this reflection alone to have determined a mother against this marriage? But, Oh! how hard is the unchanged heart of man! how cruel is the unrenewed creature! and how deadly a passion is ambition!

“ It was agreed that the bridal party should make a tour on the Continent immediately after the marriage. But as I always had an inexpressible dread of the sea, together with all the other usual hazards to which travellers are liable, I requested to be left at home; in consequence of which it was some months after her marriage before I saw my daughter again.

“ During the whole tour of the noble party on the Continent, I remained at Howard-Court, having Miss Chelmsford for my companion; with no other consolation than that which flowed from the reflection of pos-

sessing a duchess for my daughter, for at this time my mind first became somewhat uneasy upon religious subjects, and I began, during this dull interval, to entertain some kind of faint idea that I might not be precisely that perfect character which I had hitherto supposed myself to be.

“Many persons pretend to know the precise moment and occasion when they first experienced a change of heart. One person will say, ‘I was awakened under such a sermon, or I was first enlightened by such a text.’ But I can give no such precise account of my first impressions: I can only say, that about this time, that is, the period of my daughter’s marriage, I began to have some slight suspicions that all was not well with me.

“It was on the day of the wedding, when the bridal party had just left the house, that, after having watched the superb train of equipages till they were hid from my view by the trees of the park, desirous to be alone, I walked out into the shrubbery, and taking a winding path which led to the back of it, I sat down on a seat which commanded a view of the open country at a distance, and, across a small field, of a little cottage situated in a garden. In this cottage lived a young pair, who had been married eighteen months, and I saw the young woman sitting at her door rocking her baby to sleep, and even at that distance heard the sound of her rural lullaby. It was natural for me to compare the humble lot of this young person with that of my Lydia, and to ask myself if Lydia had the same chance of happiness as this young woman had with the husband of her affections. I then thought of the sweet pale face of my daughter, as she stood before the altar, and the affection she had avowed for Mr. Berrington, whose many excellencies would have promised her every happiness; when such a feeling of regret and remorse suddenly assailed me, that I burst into an agony of tears, and continued weeping for some time. At length, rousing myself, I tried to feel cheerful, and walked towards home: but still the idea of my Lydia, made unhappy by me, pursued me every where, in spite of all my efforts to shake it off.

“A few days after this, Mr. Berrington returned, and called on me, but was cold and reserved, and left me

without once mentioning Lydia. The next time I saw him, which was at a gentleman's house in the neighbourhood, he behaved much as usual, though appearing more than ordinarily serious. On this occasion, the character and opinions of a pious person who had lately died in the neighbourhood were brought forward; when several doctrines maintained by that person were called in question, of which the most prominent were these—the depravity of human nature; the need of an entire change; the utter inability of man to help himself; and redemption the exclusive work of the Divinity.

“A certain gentleman remarked, that it was a great absurdity in any one to say that man could not do well without divine assistance, and, moreover, exceedingly pernicious, as furnishing an argument for licentiousness; ‘since,’ added he, ‘if a man cannot help sinning, where is the justice of condemning him for his sins?’

“‘Sir,’ said Mr. Berrington, ‘should a man, shut up in a burning house from which he could not be rescued without the help of my ladder, obstinately refuse to avail himself of that ladder when freely offered to him; would you say that such a man was unjustly used, or even unfortunate, if he were burned to death?’

“‘Surely not,’ said the gentleman; ‘and if your simile held good throughout, I should acknowledge myself convinced. But your man in the burning house is not quite helpless; he can walk to your ladder, and choose and resolve either to accept your help or to be burned: he is, therefore, not totally helpless, which you say every man must be, with regard to his own salvation.’

“‘Sir,’ said Mr. Berrington, ‘when man attempts to lay down precisely the modes and forms of God's dealings with man, he is evidently meddling with those things which are too high for him. Many things we must receive from Scripture, though we do not understand them: and I think every man who looks seriously into his own heart, and consults his past experience, must be brought to the confession, that in his own strength he can do no one good thing; in consequence, he can take no step whatever towards his own salvation. Mr. Berrington then brought forward the Article on the subject of works done before justification.—‘Works done before the

grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-Authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.' (13th Article of the Church of England.)

"After having examined this Article, which appeared to me extraordinary, though, as a good church-woman, I could not gainsay it, I replied, 'But, allowing this to be true, you certainly will admit, Mr. Berrington, that after people are regenerated, they may produce good works, and make themselves acceptable to God?'

" 'When a person is regenerate, Madam,' said Mr. Berrington, 'that person is assuredly to be looked upon as justified and accepted; not however on his own account, or for his own works, but on account of the merits and death of Christ.'

" 'Then I perceive,' I answered, 'that you entirely exclude good works, and count them as nothing in your scheme of salvation; and consequently, as my good friend here says, you open the door to all manner of licentiousness?'

" 'By no means, Madam,' he replied; 'for the tree being known by its fruit, the individual who does not produce good works cannot be a regenerate person.'

" 'And, on the contrary,' said I, exultingly, 'he who does produce good works must be a regenerate person; although he has never been made sensible of any especial or miraculous call to a divine life; and though he cannot speak the modern technical language of religion!—Do you allow this, Mr. Berrington?'

" 'I cannot allow, Madam,' said Mr. Berrington, 'that any one can be a regenerate person who thinks well of himself: for the regenerate person feels himself to be a miserable sinner, and counts his righteousness to be filthy rags.'

" 'Well,' said I, 'these things appear to me to be a collection of riddles. At one time, you say that we are to know a believer by his good actions; and at another time, you say that the best actions of the best men are but filthy rags!'

“ ‘Because,’ replied Mr. Berrington, ‘every religious man is fully aware that all which is commendable in what he has been enabled to do, is the work of the Spirit; while every thought, word, and deed, which has sprung from himself alone, is only evil continually.’

“ ‘Then I am to understand,’ said I, ‘that there are, in your opinion, only two sorts of persons in the world; viz. those that have been called unto salvation, and those who have not?’

“ ‘Yes,’ said Mr. Berrington, ‘I certainly think so.’

“ I laughed, and turning to the lady of the house, said, ‘I am afraid then, if Mr. Berrington’s doctrine is true, that we commit a great blunder when we teach our children to thank their heavenly Father that he hath called them to a state of salvation; for if the good people will scarcely allow us considerate parents to be in that state, how much less our poor ignorant children!’

“ ‘As there is a song spoken of in Scripture,’ said Mr. Berrington, ‘a new song, which the saints alone are said to learn and sing; so there are many passages in our Book of Common Prayer which none but persons of the same description can truly and sincerely repeat. And every parent who is aware of this, will anxiously endeavour to impress it upon his children’s minds, that while it is easy for them to go through all the services of the Church with the lips only, none but the saints of God are capable of entering into them with the heart.’

“ Although I had performed so ridiculous a part in the conversation which I have described, yet the conversation itself produced a considerable effect upon my mind. I thought of it much as I went home, and my doubts of myself gradually increased.

“ It has been remarked, that if one single right idea upon the subject of religion can be brought with power to the mind, further light will gradually break in, making new and important discoveries from time to time. The question had occurred to me—Have I a right, as a regenerate person, to use the Liturgy of the Church of England? or am I to be counted among those of its members who worship only with their lips? And this idea, having once entered, returned upon me on every occasion of public worship, destroyed my self-complacency, and silenced my tongue: so that a short-sighted

observer might have supposed that I had almost ceased to pray, even at the very moment when I had, in fact, only begun to pray.

“About this time, our vicar was removed; when having no longer any jealousy of Mr. Berrington respecting Lydia, I procured the benefice for him: after which, whether from gratitude, or whether from seeing something more serious in me than formerly, he came oftener to see me, and oftener entered into conversation with me.

“In the mean time, I heard frequently from my daughter. For some weeks, she dated her letters from Paris; then from Switzerland; from Rome; and finally from Naples; in which last place, she said the duke had determined to remain some time, having met with an old acquaintance there. In these letters, my Lydia gave me some lively descriptions of what she had seen, though she seldom mentioned her husband: but I was sorry, after a while, to perceive the animation of her descriptions becoming less, and an increased restraint stealing over all her correspondence. I did not dare, at present, to make any remarks in my answers signifying that I had observed this; much less could I put any searching question to her. My uneasiness, however, continued to increase, though I could not define its cause; and, in consequence, I felt considerable relief, when, at the end of more than eighteen months, I was informed by my daughter, that she expected to be in England almost as soon as her letter, and begging me to hasten to one of the duke’s seats, which I shall call Bellevue, to which place they intended to repair immediately on their landing; the duke having sent orders that preparations should there be made for their reception.

“I waited only till a second letter informed me that the family was actually in England, before I set out for Bellevue; where, after a tedious journey, I arrived on the third day, about three o’clock in the afternoon, full of anxious and tender expectation. It was a moment of exultation, when my eye first beheld the plantations clothing almost one entire side of the horizon, and caught a remote view of the turrets of the magnificent family mansion. As I passed the park lodge, I enquired of the porter if the duchess was well; and being told that he had seen her the day before in an open carriage in the

park, I was satisfied. We drove up to the house through a long extent of woodland prospect, which served but to heighten my expectations of the more cultivated scenery which surrounded the house.

“The Castle of Bellevue had been built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and retained all the magnificence of those times. It stood on an elevated spot in the centre of a lawn inclosed by woods. We drove up to the front door of the mansion, and ascending an immense flight of steps, I was ushered into a hall, illuminated by a skylight, and encircled with a gallery supported by pillars of marble, intermingled with statues as large as life erected on elegant pedestals. This hall opened into another, which extended to the opposite front of the house; and through the doors, which were then open, I caught a view of an extensive sheet of water, pouring down from a high ground covered with woods till it fell dashing and foaming into a lake which spread itself out between the house and the hill. On each side of the first hall were doors leading into various long suites of apartments, some of which being open, displayed as much magnificence as my ambitious mind could have coveted. On each side of the hall was also a superb flight of stairs winding round to the corridor, and being of fine old oak with carved ornaments, conveyed an idea of ancient grandeur, very pleasing at that moment to my imagination.

“Being known to be the mother of the lady of the mansion, I was received with the utmost deference by the servants in waiting, who led me up stairs, through many handsome apartments, into an elegant dressing-room, where I presently found myself in the arms of my daughter. The approach to this room was through an antechamber, filled with beautiful exotic plants in pots, which scattered a rich perfume through both apartments. The dressing-room itself was furnished with the utmost elegance; but the windows being shaded with rose-coloured muslin, which threw a glow upon all within the apartment, prevented me, at first, from observing the extreme paleness of my daughter’s countenance. I was, however, considerably surprised by the excessive agitation which she betrayed during this first interview; insomuch that, being terrified, I ran to one of

the windows, drew aside the curtain, and thus threw the full light of day upon her face. Her very dejected appearance added to my terror, and returning to her, I put my arms round her, and pressed her to my bosom. 'My Lydia! my child! my daughter!' I said, 'are you ill? or are you unhappy? Beloved one, speak, and free me from this intolerable uncertainty.'

"She answered only by a renewal of her tears, and by laying her head upon my bosom.

"Being now convinced that all was not as it should be, my heart instantly reproached me as being the cause of her affliction. But looking for some one on whom to throw a part of the blame, I mentioned her husband, asking if he was kind to her, and expressing high resentment on the supposition that he could be otherwise.

"On hearing this question, she seemed to make an effort to recover herself: but without precisely answering my question, she assured me that she enjoyed many many blessings, and that her agitation was to be attributed only to the sight of a parent from whom she had been so long parted.

"I endeavoured to be satisfied with this explanation, and anxiously waited to see some return of colour in her cheeks: for her paleness was alarming, and I earnestly wished to attribute her agitation to the suddenness of our meeting.

"I sat with my daughter during the remainder of the morning, when, among other subjects, she communicated the agreeable news, that she had some hopes of giving her husband an heir. She also entertained me with several accounts of what she had seen abroad; by which she succeeded, in some degree, in allaying those fears for her happiness, which her extreme agitation on first seeing me had excited.

"There were at this time many visitors at Bellevue, all of whom were that morning engaged with the duke in some party of pleasure abroad. We were therefore left in perfect tranquillity till about five o'clock; when the sound of carriages apprized us of their return: shortly after which my son-in-law entered the room where we were, and having addressed me with politeness, though I thought with some degree of coldness, he abruptly proceeded to tell my daughter, that Madame

de Bleville had unfortunately fallen from her horse, but he hoped without receiving any serious injury.

“To this remark, Lydia only replied, ‘I am glad that she is not much hurt;’ and then speaking of something else, I asked my son-in-law who this Madame de Bleville was, adding, ‘You did not mention her name, my Lydia, when you enumerated your guests.’

“My daughter made no reply to this remark; but her husband, I thought, looked at her in a manner which said much, and taking up my question, he answered with vivacity, ‘Madame de Bleville is one of the most charming French women I ever saw; and this is saying very very much, as any one may know who is acquainted with the delightful vivacity of the females on the Continent.’

“‘Vivacity!’ I replied: ‘we will not contest with them the palm of wit and animation: they certainly may excel us in these points, being strangers to those restraints of propriety which English women count superior to all the glitter and eclat of foreign levity.’

“To this remark my son-in-law made no answer; but turning round on his heel, and looking at his watch, he left the room; when I should certainly have questioned my daughter further upon the history of Madame de Bleville, had she not warned me that I had little time to lose in preparing for dinner, and affectionately offered to lead me to my apartments.

“While dressing for dinner, many thoughts occurred of no very agreeable nature; but I was scarcely ready when my sweet daughter knocked at the door, and begged to be permitted to lead me down and introduce me to the company then assembled in the house.

“I shall never forget the charming appearance which my Lydia made when she presented herself before me. Always lovely and beautiful as she had been from her earliest years, there was now a touching softness, a finished elegance, in her whole manner, seldom seen but in those who frequent the highest circles; together with an appearance of deep humility, which altogether rendered her, at least in my eyes, the most accomplished example of loveliness any where to be found: in addition to which the extreme paleness and fairness of her complexion seemed to add a new charm as it conveyed

that idea of perishableness which adds a pathetic interest to every lovely and attractive object. 'You have a noble house, my dear!' I said, while she was leading me along a vast gallery, enriched at one end by a brilliant painted window, and at the other, finished by the superb staircase before mentioned.

"She looked at me as I spoke, and replied, 'I have many blessings: but happiness'—and here she stopped.

" 'What, my dear?' I asked.

" 'Happiness,' she replied, forcing a smile, 'does not depend on the size or magnificence of a house.'

" 'I hope, however, my Lydia,' I said, 'that the magnificence of a house does not impair the happiness of its owner.'

" 'It affects it neither way, my dear Madam,' she replied; and hastened forward to the door of a superb drawing-room, which we approached by a large antechamber.

"This drawing-room was very full of company, each individual of which rose as we entered, and remained standing till my daughter had properly introduced me: after which the party separated into different groups; of which some were standing, some sitting, and others lounging in an easy and careless way against the chairs and sofas of those who were seated. Several of the persons who were scattered about the room began immediately to gather round my daughter; and I was much struck with the calm politeness and ease of her manner, wherein a becoming dignity was as remarkable as the most perfect humility; while the sparkling intelligence she discovered was mingled with an evident desire to keep as much in the background as her elevated rank and situation in the family could justify.

"The individuals who were gathered immediately round my daughter appeared to be persons of the first breeding, and I was pleased with the unfeigned respect which they paid her. The size of the room allowed them to converse apart without whispering or interfering with the rest, and the topics they chose would have done credit to any society. But I was not so entirely engaged by these persons as not to observe what was passing at the other end of the room, where a gay group, among whom was my son-in-law, were gathered round a lady

who, being dressed in a most laboured and somewhat *outré* style, and highly rouged, was talking with a volubility and vivacity which caused frequent smiles, and sometimes faint attempts at laughter.

“ ‘Madame is very brilliant to-day,’ said one of our party, ‘notwithstanding her unfortunate accident this morning.’ ”

“ Every one smiled on hearing this remark, excepting my daughter, who gravely said, ‘I hope Madame was not hurt. To what was her accident owing?’ ”

“ ‘Only a fall from her horse,’ replied an elderly gentleman; ‘but, as your Grace may easily believe by her present vivacity, she was not materially injured.’ ”

“I thought I perceived a faint colour pass over the cheek of my daughter on hearing this; but in no other way did her countenance vary. At length, Madame de Bleville arose, and crossing the room with a kind of tripping girlish step, she addressed my daughter with playful fondness, and shewed a bruise on her arm received in her fall: ‘but, perhaps,’ added she in French, ‘you have not yet heard of my accident, or how it happened.’ So saying, she sat down on an embroidered stool at the feet of Lydia, and in a manner not ungraceful made out a long history of her misadventure; the sum of which was, that her horse having taken fright, had thrown her, but that she had escaped from all injury by the care of the duke, who was at hand to support her as she fell, and to break her fall.

“ My daughter, whose every glance I read with the utmost anxiety, dreading to discover what I already but too deeply suspected, that I had made her miserable by forcing her into this splendid marriage, acted on this occasion with such perfection of self-command, that it was not easy to perceive what were her real feelings with respect to this lady, though I was assured that she could entertain no esteem for such a character. I observed, however, that she permitted her to finish her story without interruption, and then remarked, that in cases of escapes of this kind there was the greatest reason for thankfulness to Providence, inasmuch as many have been deprived of life on less threatening occasions.

“ The calm dignity of Lydia’s manner seemed to operate as a check on the impertinent volubility of her

guest, and Madame accordingly remained for an instant silent, at the same time seeming occupied in clasping a bracelet which she had probably unfastened for the very purpose ; till seeing my son-in-law approach, she recovered herself, and calling upon him to assist, she was by him lifted up and placed upon a sofa by his wife : while he, leaning on the arm of the sofa close by her, seemed to listen with rapture to her discourse, which being partly in French, and partly in Italian, was but imperfectly intelligible to me.

“ At length, on her addressing my daughter as follows, I was made to understand that Madame de Bleville had been boasting of the advantage of rouge, and expressing a wish that the duchess would be persuaded to use it— ‘ Your Grace does not know,’ said she in English, ‘ how charming a little colour would make you look. So sweetly fair, you want only a little of the rose to render you perfectly beautiful ; and I appeal to his Grace to corroborate my assertion.’

“ On being thus appealed to, my son-in-law looked at his wife with an expression which I greatly disliked, and said, ‘ The duchess knows my opinion on this subject already : it is needless now to repeat it. I have often told her how very much better she would appear in my eyes if she would use a little art to enliven the extreme paleness of her complexion.’

“ In reply to this, my daughter smiled, with an expression which I thought would have touched the hardest heart ; and placing her hand on his arm, ‘ Would you persuade your wife to use art ?’ she said. ‘ ’Tis a lesson which may easily be taught ; but perhaps not so easily forgotten.’

“ Before the duke could answer, dinner was announced, and we were led into a superb dining-room, where the repast was served up in a style so pleasing to my eager desires after grandeur, that for a while I forgot the late scene in the drawing-room. My daughter, I thought, did the honours of her table with so much ease and politeness, that I was perfectly charmed, and could not help complimenting her apart on the extraordinary improvement of her manner.

“ She gave me a look upon this which, though mild, seemed almost to say, ‘ Yes ; but I have paid dearly for

this fine polish.' She immediately afterwards, however, recovered her usual soft expression.

"After being a little familiarized with the splendid scene around me, I had leisure to observe my son-in-law, who being seated at the lower end of the table, seemed almost entirely devoted to Madame de Bleville, who by her animated conversation had formed around her a little audience, which she kept in a constant state of excitement; the very servants who stood behind their masters appearing to be scarcely able to withdraw their attention sufficiently from her to enable them to perform their respective duties. I was too far off to hear much of what she said; but her manner offended me, and that of the duke much more: so that when the ladies withdrew, after dinner, I could not refrain from observing to an old lady of distinguished rank, near whom I found myself in the drawing-room, that I did not at all admire Madame de Bleville, nor the style of manners which she had found means to introduce. The old lady shrugged up her shoulders, and gave me to understand, that her sentiments on this point coincided with mine, adding, that she much regretted the influence which this French woman seemed to have acquired over the duke. Finding the old lady inclined to be communicative, we entered further into this subject; when several circumstances relative to it being told me, of which I had before no idea, I resolved, very improperly, to speak upon it to my daughter as soon as an opportunity should serve. And this opportunity presented itself the very next morning, on my daughter sending to request my company to breakfast with her in her dressing-room.

"Having been seated a few minutes, I opened the subject which lay nearest my heart; and beginning by some remarks on Madame de Bleville, I asked her how she approved the intimacy which seemed to subsist between that lady and her husband.'

"A slight colour rose in her cheek when I spoke. Then endeavouring to smile, 'My dear mother,' she said, 'I have no fault to find with my husband: he is exceedingly indulgent to me: and I should be ungrateful in the extreme if I were not sensible of these indulgences.'

“ I looked at her with an expression which seemed to say, ‘ You are not speaking what you think.’ ”

“ She took no notice of this enquiring look, but added, ‘ I wished, my dear Madam, particularly for your company this morning, in order to be assisted by your advice and experience. Through the bounty of my husband, I have a large sum of money to expend among the poor in our neighbourhood : but I as yet neither know their exact situations nor their chief wants. Will it not be a pleasant employment for us to explore the neighbourhood in our carriage, and to make such enquiries as may enable us to spend our money to the greatest advantage of the indigent around us ; that thus, with the divine help, we may make the blessings of a bountiful Providence, poured thus largely upon us, to redound to the glory of the great Giver ? ’ ”

“ ‘ Lydia,’ I said, ‘ you are a sweet creature !—an angel ! ’ ”

“ ‘ I doubt not that I am such,’ she added, ‘ in my mother’s eyes ; ’ at the same time taking my hand and kissing it : ‘ for I now begin to have some faint idea of what a parent’s feelings are.’ ”

“ ‘ No, Lydia,’ I said, ‘ it is not because you are my child that I think you almost an angel : no ; it is because I see in you such charity, such patience, such self-denial, such forbearance, that your character every moment rises upon me, and constrains me almost to blush while I call you my daughter.’ ”

“ She looked down, and the faint colour heightened in her cheek. ‘ My dear mother,’ she said, ‘ forbear, I pray you. Remember that I am but a human being ; an individual of a race in whom dwelleth no good thing ; and that I dare not be guilty of the sacrilege of taking that praise to myself which is due only to the Divinity. I am not, by any means,’ she added, looking up, ‘ all you think me to be ; but supposing, for argument’s sake, I were such, and more also ; it is, and must be, so entirely the work of God, so much the effect of the daily supplies of the influence of the Holy Spirit, when an individual ceases in the smallest measure from sin, that there is nothing I so much dread for myself and my friends, as the application of that praise to the second cause, which is due only to the First Author and Cause of all good.’ ”

“ ‘My Lydia,’ I said, ‘you are warm.’

“ ‘Am I?’ she answered, smiling. ‘Excuse me, my dear mother. But let me entreat you, do not praise me in future: depend upon it, that I don’t deserve praise; that I am nothing; and that, in myself, I never can be otherwise than nothing.’

“ ‘I do not understand this, Lydia,’ I answered.

“ ‘She seemed surprised, and said, ‘My dear mother, how is this? Are you not aware of the views of religion which were given me by the tutor you placed over me?’

“ ‘I had never heard her mention Mr. Berrington’s name, or allude to him, since the day when she had made the confession of her regard for him; but she now did it with so much ease, that I flattered myself she had ceased to think of him except as the instructor of her youth: whereupon I replied, ‘I am not aware of your having acquired any principles but such as I entertain, and such as are generally taught by the Church; that is, if I understand the doctrines of our Church aright. However,’ I added, ‘this is very certain, that I do not understand why, when you allow yourself, for argument’s sake, to be a good and pious person, you still say, that in yourself you are nothing, and that it is almost sacrilege to appropriate praise to yourself.’

“ ‘Because,’ she replied, ‘that even granting myself to be one of the excellent of the earth, which, Heaven is my witness, I dare not presume to suppose, excepting for argument’s sake, I still hold it unlawful to receive any sort of praise as my due; inasmuch as I am naturally altogether vile, lost, and undone; yea, and unable to help myself. Supposing myself then to be converted and assured of future glory, the whole work of my salvation is entirely of God: instead, therefore, of boasting what I am, and what I shall be, it becomes me rather to say, without my God’s assistance I can do nothing well, but through his help I hope to perform his will—so that if I am indeed now regenerate, I do heartily thank our heavenly Father that he hath brought me into this state of salvation, and on his grace alone I depend, in order to my continuance in the same unto my life’s end.’

“ ‘But, Lydia,’ I answered, ‘if I understand you

right, you make nothing of a man's good works and personal righteousness. You seem to say, that let a man be ever so good, he has nothing, and is as nothing before God.'

" 'Certainly,' she replied; 'this is the doctrine of our Church, and must also be that of every Christian Church under heaven.'

"I now recollected the conversation I had engaged in on this very subject with Mr. Berrington, at a gentleman's house in my own neighbourhood—a conversation by which I had been considerably impressed for a time, but of which the effects had gradually become weaker and weaker, and probably would have been entirely lost, had not my daughter thus called my attention again to the same subject. In the midst of this conversation we finished our breakfast; when a servant coming to say that the carriage was at the door, I hastened to accompany my beloved daughter in her proposed charitable excursion.

"I spent two months with my beloved Lydia at this time; and many were the delightful airings we took together in the charming environs of Bellevue. On these occasions, my daughter carried with her a book, in which she drew a sketch of every cottage she visited on her husband's domain, finishing the little drawing at her leisure, and connecting with each drawing such a history of the cottage and its inhabitants, as might enable her to recognize them in time of need, or to miss them if either the parents did not appear at church, or the children at the Sunday-school. Innumerable were her plans of doing and diffusing good; and the quiet activity with which all these things were brought to pass, was particularly striking to me, who having been in the habit of supposing that my good works were to do great things for my soul, had acted as if I were afraid that they might not come into the reckoning, if done in too private a manner. In my charming daughter there was none of that bustling, patronizing, parading spirit, which we sometimes see in great ladies who have some inclination to do good—no sentimental hovering over a sick child or a death-bed—no desire to shew herself in scenes where the condescension of her Grace might be supposed to make a charming picture—but all she did

seemed so to flow from a humble and converted heart, that every action seemed, as it were, impressed with the stamp of eternal truth and divine rectitude. Such was her character and deportment in private: while in public, and in her husband's presence, she was calm, attentive, and polite.

“While I remained at Bellevue, there was a constant succession of visitors, and many gaieties going forward; insomuch that the scene and the society were continually changing, Madame de Bleville being the only person whom I found and left at the castle. Lydia, however, though polite to all, did not appear to attach herself to a single individual among the visitors. And when I once mentioned this circumstance to her, she gave me an answer that surprised me, but which I afterwards too well understood.—‘I have much to do, my dear mother,’ she said, ‘and only a very little time for executing my purposes. The persons who are here could not assist me in my work; and I must not let them hinder me.’

“During my visit at his house, I had seen very little of my son-in-law, excepting in public, and could not but greatly disapprove of what I had opportunity of observing. I felt assured that there could be no tender fellowship between him and my daughter: and though she studiously avoided touching on the subject, it might easily be perceived that she was not happy.

“My conscience now began to reproach me severely for having promoted this marriage; and as the idea of Mr. Berrington could not but present itself to my mind on such occasions, I thought how happy my Lydia would have been with him, especially as she had enough to support her family in affluence and even splendour. These thoughts would sometimes insinuate themselves even in the midst of scenes of the utmost magnificence, and embitter all the satisfaction which I fancied I might otherwise have felt in seeing my daughter surrounded by appearances which would not have disgraced a princess. In such circumstances, and while entertaining these thoughts, I felt an increasing displeasure against the duke, who appeared to me to be the person employed by Heaven to inflict the punishment due to my ambition. He had hitherto treated me with distant politeness, and

it should have been my object, for my daughter's sake, to appear contented with this state of things. But I had not sufficient grace to exercise this forbearance; and, on seeing some gross neglect of my daughter, I one day flamed out—and having spoken my mind far too plainly to be any longer endured under the duke's roof, it was politely intimated that my presence might be dispensed with.

“My daughter had often before this accident supplicated me with many tender looks to use all possible forbearance with respect to her husband: it was therefore a bitter affliction to her when she found that we were to be immediately separated. At the moment of my departure, she hung upon my bosom with inexpressible anguish; and pressed her sweet pale cheek close to mine. ‘Oh, my Lydia!’ I said, ‘and must I leave you, at such a time too? and with such a man? But I take all the blame to myself. Had I been content to see you in a humble situation with the man you preferred, all would have been well!’

“Here she stopped me, placing her lovely hand upon my lips. ‘It is all right now, my dear mother,’ she said: ‘I do not regret what has happened: I have lately seen the reason of it. The way is smoother, is easier than it would otherwise have been. One thing only I regret, but that will, no doubt, be arranged in a manner I cannot foresee.’

“I urged my daughter to explain these dark sentences. But weeping and pressing me to her heart, she could say no more; and my son-in-law coming to hand me to my carriage, I was obliged to depart.

“I returned home full of grief and anxiety; and as soon as I arrived at my own house, I sent for Mr. Berrington, to whom I opened my mind, both with respect to my daughter's present situation, and the unhand-some manner in which I had been treated by her husband.

“He seemed very greatly agitated during the recital, and sighed very deeply while I was speaking. ‘These circumstances are to teach you, Madam,’ he then replied, ‘how little, how very little, we ought to desire any one earthly thing.’

“I answered hastily, and endeavouring to sift his

thoughts—‘What! Mr. Berrington,’ I said, ‘did you desire this marriage for your pupil?’

“‘I, Madam?’ he replied, shrinking back as I put the question—‘I, Madam? I heard of it with grief, with horror, and with amazement; and should surely have expostulated, had it not been hurried to a conclusion during my absence.’

“‘And wherefore,’ I said, ‘why did you feel so great a dislike to this marriage? Did you imagine that my poor daughter was attached to any other person?’

“‘By no means, Madam,’ he answered; ‘and if I might presume to speak, I imagine that she would have desired no other, at her tender age, than to have remained under your roof, pursuing her employments as formerly for some years to come.’

“I could make no reply to this remark, but bursting into tears, loudly lamented the fate of my Lydia. At the same time, with the inconsistency natural to a sinful being, I felt something like consolation at the idea of her unhappiness being of a splendid nature—that the beautiful duchess was still an object of envy to many, and of admiration to all who beheld her. Neither was the thought that I might have a grandson of almost princely rank without its alleviating sweetness to my unregenerate mind.

“The time so anxiously desired by me, when I hoped to see the noble little stranger, at length arrived, but brought with it a subject of affliction, for which I was not prepared. While daily awaiting tidings from Bellevue, where my daughter, by her own desire, was to be confined, I was one morning awakened by a special messenger who, travelling night and day, brought me a letter from my son-in-law, informing me that my Lydia had a son, but was extremely ill, and did not appear likely to recover so soon as might be hoped. He added, that she expressed a great desire to see me; and concluded by requesting me to lose no time in undertaking the journey.

“I will not trouble my reader with an account of my feelings on this occasion. Suffice it to say, that, using all possible expedition, I arrived at Bellevue within twenty-four hours after the receipt of the melancholy summons. But with what new and different feelings did

I enter the duke's magnificent mansion this second time ! As I approached the place, it was in a state of agony which I cannot describe, every moment dreading to meet some visible token of my Lydia's death ; so that it is not to be imagined, what comfort I gathered from the circumstance of no hatchment appearing over the great door. I, however, augured no good from the countenance of the porter at the lodge, nor from that of the servants who received me in the hall. Nevertheless, forbearing to question them, I was led up stairs into the anteroom of my beloved Lydia's apartment, where Mrs. Short, her chief female attendant, coming up to me, attempted to speak, but burst into tears. I took her hand, for I knew that she was faithful to my daughter ; and there are moments when all distinctions of rank are forgotten. However, before she could command herself sufficiently to speak, the duchess dowager appeared, from whom I learned that my daughter was indeed alive, but that little hope was entertained of her recovery. At the same moment, the old lady led me into the room, telling me, that as my daughter was asleep, I might now see her, if I could so far command my feelings as not to disturb her. There was a coldness and formality on this occasion, in the manner of my old friend, which I failed not to observe ; though this feeling was presently swallowed up in others infinitely more interesting.

“ The room into which I was led was a most magnificent apartment. At the further end of it were two large windows descending to the ground, the curtains of which were let down, and, being of crimson, cast a fine glow over the apartment. Near these windows stood a cradle, and by it sat two well-dressed women, one of whom was rocking it. On a superb bed, not far from the entrance-door, lay my daughter in a disturbed sleep, during which she frequently started, when a slight convulsion agitated her features and passed instantly away. Her illness having been short, her features were not much altered, and how pale she was, how very pale, did not appear from the glow thrown upon her from the curtains. There was however a something in her appearance which so plainly marked the approach of death, that, unable to resist my feelings, I drew hastily away, and walking I knew not whither, soon found myself standing

near the nurses, arrested there by the sight of my daughter's baby in his satin cradle and rich rosette; his infant features having scarcely yet assumed a form sufficiently marked to allow of a conjecture of what they might be in future, and his little dimpled hand lying carelessly on his quilt.

"Such a variety of conflicting feelings arose in my mind on this occasion, that I should undoubtedly have fallen to the ground, had I not been supported by the two women who attended the cradle, by whom I was presently conveyed out of the room. I had scarcely recovered my senses, when I was informed that my daughter was awake, had been apprized of my arrival, and desired to see me.

"I hastened to her immediately, though it was with a mixture of emotions which no language can describe. She received me with a burst of tears; but instantly becoming calm, and begging me to sit down by her bed, she added, in a tone of the most inexpressible sweetness, 'My beloved mother, you will not mourn for me: I am now going to enjoy that happiness which I have long, very long looked forward to.' Then as it were checking herself, she paused a moment, but resumed—'And yet, if it had pleased God, for the sake of my dear husband, and my lovely baby'—She would have proceeded, but her tears prevented her: then seeming to look earnestly towards that end of the room where the infant lay, she gave way for a few minutes to such a gush of sorrow as seemed to tear in pieces her dying frame.

"On this occasion, her husband's mother, the physician, and several others who stood round her bed, gently reasoned with her: on which she recollected herself, wiped away her tears, and lifting up those lovely eyes whose expression is fixed for ever on my memory, 'A few more struggles,' she said; 'a few more contests between nature and grace; between faith and unbelief; and all will be over,—over for ever.' She then added, in a lower voice, 'And then will come glory!—unmixed glory! and we shall be comforted together in Zion!'

"After this, followed either a slight fainting or a deathlike sleep, but it was probably the former; for the

physician thought it necessary to rub her temples with hartshorn, and to put a cordial to her lips.

“In the mean time, the duke entered the room. Deep concern sat on his countenance, but he seemed determined not to give way to any expression of his feelings. He bowed to me, and stood for a while on the other side of the bed, having his eyes fixed upon his lovely wife. And while he still remained in that posture, she revived, looked at him, knew him, and putting out her hand to him, addressed him with such affection and piety, thanking him for all the kindness he had shewn her, and pointing out to him the source of her present comfort in terms so impressive, that he was no longer able to preserve his haughty coldness; but falling on his knees, he pressed his lips upon her dying hand, and remained for some moments audibly sobbing. During this time, she recommended her baby to him, and particularly besought him, if the beloved infant should live, to allow him the privilege of being trained under a pious tutor. She then spoke of her comfort at that solemn moment, and the sources of that comfort, with such a degree of fervency, pressing him to seek a like consolation for himself at a like trying hour, that he evidently became considerably affected; when hastily pressing her hand to his lips, he arose and rushed out of the room. She followed him with her eyes, and uttered a very deep sigh as he disappeared.

“After this scene, being overcome with weakness, she lay long silent. In the mean time, the shades of evening approached; and some of the party leaving the room, I still sat by her, accompanied only by her maid and nurse. We hoped she was sleeping; and indeed she remained so long quiet, that we trusted she might awake refreshed. I desired to remain with her all night; and as she appeared decidedly better about ten o'clock, the physician, who had not slept for several nights, consented to take some rest, as did the duchess dowager and her son. I was thus left alone with my daughter, her maid and her nurse, other persons being within call.

“When my Lydia found herself almost alone with me, she seemed to be comforted, and said, ‘Beloved mother, this is pleasant!’ She then asked if I had seen her baby; begged he might be brought to her bedside,

and laid on my lap; and several times she tried to raise herself up to look at him.

“It is a well known custom of very little infants, to sleep all day, and begin to use their new faculty of sight when the candles are lighted. Accordingly, the infant was then wide awake, and lay quietly on my lap. ‘He has eyes like you, my Lydia,’ I said, ‘a dark and bright blue.’

“She sighed. ‘Ah! little precious one,’ she said, ‘of how little avail is external form, or outward perfection, or hereditary honour! O my mother! use your influence, if he lives, that he may have a religious education. Perhaps Mr. Berrington might be persuaded to take charge of him. I have signified my wish on this subject; nevertheless, I am free from anxiety, being persuaded, that whether living or dying, my baby will be blessed. I have long felt that I should not live to rear him myself; and am well contented with the secret assurance that he will be happy.’

“At this moment, the nurse came to remove him. ‘No, no,’ she said; ‘leave him; it may not be long. I see his little head; I hear his gentle breathing: it cannot be long!’

“A considerable interval of silence followed this; and as my Lydia’s eyes were closed, I hoped she was again in a refreshing sleep.

“The nurse, who supplied the baby with nourishment, had sat down on a stool at my feet. All was still, excepting that there was a low and hollow murmur of the wind from without doors: such a sound as seems to tell of days which are past, and to inspire sad forebodings of the future. In this interval, which was extended to some hours, my mind was occupied upon many subjects. Looking on my daughter’s child, many scenes of her own babyhood and early youth recurred to my remembrance—her smiling infancy, her gentle childhood, her lovely youth—till the tears rushed into my eyes. I recollected also her sparkling and charming figure at court; together with the scene that passed between me and herself wherein I had contended with her wishes, and enforced an entire submission to my own. The questions then occurred, Should I have thus lost her, as I am now likely to do, had she married Mr. Berrington? What have I

gained by my ambition? I sighed, while my tears began to flow more abundantly. For a long time I remained involved in the most painful reflections; till, at length, my thoughts insensibly took another turn, and, contemplating the baby who had fallen asleep on my lap, somewhat of the sentiment so sweetly expressed by a modern poet was excited in my mind—

‘O! hark thee, my baby, thy sire is a knight,
Thy mother a lady so lovely and bright;
The hills and the dales, from yon towers that I see,
They all shall belong, my sweet baby, to thee.’

Indulging this idea, I presently imagined to myself the infant now sleeping on my lap suddenly become a youth, noble in his demeanour, courteous, graceful, animated in his deportment, and possessing all the beauty of his mother in a more manly form. I fancied I could see him in the senate, with the brilliant star blazing on his breast; or in the royal presence, where he might be pointed out by those of the last age, as the son of the Late Duchess of —, the beautiful Lydia Howard. I imagined myself, in my old age, visiting this my grandson, and being treated by him with a respect and distinction which his father never condescended to shew me. I remained a long while lost in these reflections; my thoughts, from the feverish condition of my frame and the high wrought state of my sensibility, assuming that kind of body and consistency, if I may so employ these terms, which render them almost as lively and influential to the feelings as those ideas which are actually conveyed to them by the senses.

“While thus mentally engaged, my dying Lydia awoke; and by speaking roused me to my present painful situation. At first, she seemed confused, spoke hurriedly, asked where she was, desiring to be dressed, and taken down stairs: but presently recovering herself upon receiving some cordial, she said, ‘Is my dear mother here? O! that is pleasant! I have much to say to you. Come to me, my mother: come close to me: lay my head against your breast: and now hear what I have to say.’

“I prepared to obey her with trembling limbs; and having laid her baby on the lap of his nurse, I reclined myself on the bed, and placed my sweet daughter’s head on my bosom.

“ ‘And now, my mother,’ she said, ‘now I would tell you many things: but perhaps I may not have time. I wish you however to know that I have long felt assured that I should not live to be old: but this assurance, so far from making me unhappy, has produced the contrary effect of enabling me to pass through this world in comfort. You early provided, my dear parent, for my being piously educated; but it was not till my tutor entered into certain serious discourses with me, previous to my confirmation, that I obtained a just view of the depravity of my own nature, my need of a Saviour, and the great importance of those internal and spiritual operations, which we denominate *justification*, *regeneration*, and *sanctification*. I remember that, previous to his instructions, I never entertained a doubt about my being in the right way; appropriating to myself, without fear or hesitation, every Scriptural promise, together with every offer of mercy, comfort, and salvation held out to the children of God. At that time, however, I was first led to doubt my qualifications as a Christian, and to ask myself if I had ever experienced any thing like a real change of heart. In this manner I was carried on from one reflection to another, till I was gradually brought out of a state of darkness into the marvellous light of a divine and glorious day; the tutor you provided me being employed by my heavenly Father in this blessed work. And now, my dear mother, the more I was led to look into myself, the more convinced I became of my own depravity, being filled with amazement from day to day, at the horrible workings and risings of sin in my heart, connected with my utter inability of doing any thing towards saving myself. But at the same time that I was humbled by these depressing reflections, I was lifted up and supported by clear views of the infinite mercy and power of the Redeemer, together with the wonderful co-operation of all the persons of the Trinity in effecting man’s salvation. Thus I was, at once, humbled and strengthened; deprived of all self-confidence, yet filled with faith and confidence in God. And thus have I been led from step to step, till I now behold His near approach, whose presence will render me for ever happy, and whose hand will wipe away every tear from my eyes. Such is my present state, and in these circumstances he enables me

to say with the heart as well as with my lips, I heartily thank my heavenly Father that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through Jesus Christ my Saviour; and that he hath given me grace to continue in the same unto this awful hour, thus making his strength perfect in my weakness.'

"While speaking these last words, which, with all the foregoing expressions, she appeared to utter with much ease to herself, she became slightly convulsed, and desired to be raised on her pillow. I instantly sprang from the bed, elevated her head, and enquired if she were more easy in that posture. She looked rather wildly at me; and calling for her baby, it was quickly brought to her. She kissed it once or twice, then raised her eyes as if in prayer, kissed it again, and heaving a very deep sigh, fell back, and became speechless. From that moment my Lydia never spoke again, and at the end of twelve hours she expired. Thus I lost a daughter, who was surely one of the most perfect and beautiful examples ever beheld, or conceived, of the power of divine grace as displayed in a vessel of clay.

"I remained at Bellevue till after her funeral, in a state which admitted of no consolation. And when the dear remains of my precious daughter were committed to the earth, I humbly requested permission of my son-in-law to take charge of the child; but being somewhat harshly refused, I returned home, where a violent fit of illness confined me to my bed for a considerable time.

"During this period, I was frequently visited by Mr. Berrington, but was never able to discover whether he had the slightest idea of my beloved daughter Lydia's distinguishing regard for him. Of this, however, no doubt could be entertained; that he was exceedingly affected at the news of her death, and was long before he recovered his usual cheerfulness. While my illness and convalescence continued, he visited me daily, and used every means in his power to communicate those encouraging views which alone can satisfy the soul. I remember many beautiful hints which he gave me, at that time, upon religious subjects, but which I, being busy in supplying my own mind with consolations of a very different description, was neither willing nor able

to receive. The truth of the case was this ; that my daughter being removed, my ambitious views soon began to centre in her child, whom I hoped to see growing up as an ornament to his country and a pillar of the state. I had a particular delight in hearing of the little marquis, in thinking of his early honours, and in speaking of him as my grandson. Nevertheless, at this very time, the eye of a superficial observer might perhaps have noted in me some symptoms of a converted character ; since I was become externally, not only serious, but even devout, talking fluently upon religion, delighting to speak of my daughter's blessed death, repeating her pious sentiments, and describing her deep resignation. So far however was my mind from being really in a good state, that on the one hand it was secretly inflated with ambition, while on the other it was inflamed with resentment against the duke, whose grief for the loss of my daughter I did not think sufficiently marked, and who had so ungraciously refused me the charge of my grandson.

“At length, my health began to improve ; when hearing that the duke was gone abroad, and that my grandson still remained at Bellevue, I began to contemplate a visit to him, and with this view ordered suitable preparations to be made. But while meditating this scheme, I received a letter from the confidential servant above mentioned, who had been left in charge of the child, informing me that the dear infant had been suddenly taken ill, though he was then rather better : adding, however, that she wished I could see him, and give my opinion concerning him, since he was certainly a very delicate infant. On receiving this letter, I demurred not a moment, but requesting Mr. Berrington to accompany me, we hastened to Bellevue. At the porter's lodge I was told that the little marquis was better ; that he had been seen abroad the day before, and looked very well. Pleased with this information, I was driven speedily to the house, at the door of which I got out, and was admitted into the hall. It was a very fine day in the autumn, and many of the doors and windows being open to air the house, the place, though deserted, looked gay and beautiful. As I entered the great hall, enquiring eagerly after my grandson, the old servant

who had opened the doors directed me to look up towards the corridor, or gallery, which I described before as running round the upper part of the hall; and there I saw the little heir of the vast domains which surrounded me, then about ten months old, for so long it was since his beloved mother's death, in his nurse's arms, holding in his hand a slender stick, which he was drawing along the rails of the gallery, and laughing with the utmost vivacity at the noise it produced. He was dressed in white, having a sash of black love, and a small straw hat on his head with a plume of ostrich feathers. The two women who were with him, were his nurse and Mrs. Short. At sight of this little darling, I hastily ascended the stairs, and meeting the women at the head of them, I had there a full view of the lovely child; and though I saw in him all the beauty I could desire, I observed something about him at the same time which caused me to tremble for the life of its frail possessor.

“My little George, for such was the name of this lovely baby, was somewhat taller than infants commonly are at that age; his limbs were remarkably finely formed, particularly his chest and shoulders; his features were without fault; his brow open and serene; his eyes of deep yet sparkling blue; and his light hair appeared bursting forth in many lovely ringlets from a cap of the richest lace. His hat had been taken off, and he was presented to me quivering and sparkling with vivacity, while he permitted me to kiss his little open mouth, enriched with two, and only two, teeth white as pearls.

“While I still caressed him with feelings of love which I cannot describe—pure maternal love, in which ambition itself seemed for a moment to be wholly swallowed up, Mr. Berrington, who had been detained a moment behind with the carriage, joined me. As he looked on the child, he changed colour; and I thought I heard him repeat my daughter's name, but could not be certain of it. However, he seemed more agitated than I had ever seen him before.

“We were led by Mrs. Short into the rooms occupied by the child: where an account was given us of his late seizure, as well as of his general state of health, which

was not so good as the letters I had been in the habit of receiving might have led me to expect. But this false statement appeared to be rather the effect of misjudgment than of any attempt to deceive. I was however inexpressibly affected when I perceived that this lovely little creature, who had thus powerfully laid claim to every affectionate feeling of my heart—this little creature on whom I built all my hopes of future consequence in the world—this little creature, who was heir to the vast estates and distinguished honours of his father—possessed such a state of health as rendered his continuance on earth for any length of time a matter of the greatest doubt. I felt moreover, that, setting aside all his advantages of birth and fortune, I could not reconcile myself to part with this sweet child, who in every look, in every glance, in every motion, reminded me of his mother during the days of her infancy. Upon the whole, my feelings were such, that bursting into an agony of tears, and turning to Mr. Berrington, I said, ‘Oh! who can tell what the apprehensions of a parent are, except such as bear the name of parent! Mr. Berrington, if I lose this baby, I shall never be able to survive the loss!’

“The nurse and Mrs. Short melted into tears at hearing this, and Mrs. Short said, ‘Dearest Madam, do not speak of losing the dear child: he is at present very well, and God we hope will avert all future danger.’

“I spent the remainder of the day in endeavouring to persuade myself that my fears for the child had little foundation, while I took every gentle method of increasing my acquaintance with him, and conciliating his affections. After remaining till a late hour at Bellevue, I went with Mr. Berrington to an inn in the neighbourhood, where I was treated with the most flattering attention imaginable.

“The next day I repeated my visit to Bellevue, and at length found myself so incapable of enduring a separation from my little grandson, that I took a lodging in a farm-house near the castle, whence I continued to visit him daily for a few weeks.

“During this interval, the child, though lively, betrayed certain symptoms of the complaint which had

before attacked him, which ought to have been sufficient to prepare me for the impending evil: but I had by this time so far reasoned myself into a kind of persuasion that he would be spared to me, that I could scarcely fancy it possible that there was to befall me a calamity so dreadful as the loss of this child. At length, however, the time arrived for the threatening blow to descend. It was necessary for my sake that it should take place, and for the dear infant it was most desirable. I coveted earthly honours and distinctions for my darling grandchild, most ardently desiring that he should live to fill up the superior station in society which fortune seemed to have allotted him. But his heavenly Father had other views for him. He deprived him of the ducal coronet, intending to invest him with a heavenly crown; he stripped him of his earthly possessions only to bestow him a dwelling made without hands, eternal in the heavens; he removed him from earth because he loved him; and he removed him in infancy because he was willing to secure his happiness without delay.

“The last time I saw my child in seeming health, was in the arms of his nurse, in the great hall at Bellevue. I was departing for the evening, and turned back to kiss him. He had begun to love me; and as I prepared to go, he followed me with such a tender glance, as seemed to say, ‘Why do you leave me?’

“The next morning, early, I was called to him, and found him under the influence of an inflammatory complaint attended with much fever, in the arms of his nurse. I watched him for several days; during which I experienced all the agitation that could flow from the alternate influence of hope and fear, till at the end of the tenth day I saw him expire. With him perished all my proud prospects of earthly consequence, and all my long cherished views of family aggrandizement: and, praised be God, at the same moment, by the divine blessing on my affliction, I was cast down to the ground, self-abased, self-convicted, and self-aborred—cast down, in order to my future exaltation. I hardly recollect what followed the death of this lovely baby, though I remember his sweet pale face as he lay in his coffin, which was lined, as his cradle had been, with the finest

white satin. His little image is still before me now just as I last beheld him ; and I still recollect the agony which I experienced as I imprinted upon his cold lips my farewell kiss. But I leave the description of these scenes, in order to describe the effect they produced upon me.

“ The kind Mr. Berrington was at hand to convey me home, where I was again seized with a severe illness, from which I did not recover for a great length of time. But during this illness, such a view of the nonimportance of earthly concerns, together with the infinite value of the soul in comparison with all besides, was vouchsafed me, that I rose from my bed as it were a new creature ; at least, every thing around me seemed to have acquired a new aspect, and to bear as it were a new relation to me.

“ I at this time appeared to acquire such a variety of new faculties, or rather such a number of new ideas were excited in my mind, that, though hardly aware of the real state of the case, I was made sensible of this at least—that whereas I had been blind, I now began to see : in consequence of which, many things which I had once loved and coveted, appeared not only worthless but despicable in my eyes. My thoughts of sin, of myself, of my Saviour, and of the world, had undergone so extraordinary a change, that whereas I once had desired nothing so much as the earthly exaltation of my offspring, I was now enabled to rejoice in those providences by which a better inheritance was secured to them for ever. An overwhelming depression of spirits, however, took place soon after I had experienced these first views of better things ; during which I had so deep a conviction of my own depravity, as led me almost to despair of ever being rendered fit for the divine presence. Nevertheless, during this interval of darkness, I still rejoiced in my Lydia’s and her baby’s happiness ; in addition to which it was observable, that I became extremely solicitous for the spiritual good of all about me. At length, though not until after the lapse of some years, these clouds entirely passed away, and spiritual peace became my portion,—such a peace as passeth all understanding.

“ Since that period, many summers and winters are gone by : but while my mortal frame is gradually falling

to decay, my spiritual hopes are becoming daily more and more bright and lively. Mr. Berrington still lives near me, and visits me daily. He is to me as a very dear son, but never mentions the name of Lydia; neither have I hitherto been able to discover whether he ever felt more for her than for a very dear child known and loved from infancy.

“The duke, my former son-in-law, mourned not for my daughter as she deserved, but, within two years of her death, married Madame de Bleville; and his children by that lady are at this time the most brilliant stars in the hemisphere of fashion. But although the report of his daughters’ beauty, and the rumour of the dashing eclat of his sons, may sometimes reach me in my solitary retreat, these things, by the divine blessing, awaken not the slightest feeling of jealousy in my heart, nor even occasion the smallest degree of regret on account of the early death of my daughter and her lovely, lovely infant.”

Here the lady of the manor closed her manuscript; and as the perusal of it had taken up much time, she requested her young people to join her immediately in prayer.

A Prayer for the Blessings of Justification and Sanctification.

“O BLESSED LORD GOD, we earnestly entreat thee to impress our minds with the solemn truth, that we of ourselves are incapable of performing any thing towards our own salvation, and that, if we are saved, the work of redemption from first to last must be thy work alone. Convince us, O heavenly Father, of the depravity of our nature, our gross darkness with respect to spiritual things, our enmity against thee, and our own utter helplessness; and then, in thine infinite mercy, open to our understandings the only means prepared for man’s recovery.

“O Holy Father, draw us, and we will run after thee. Pardon us through thy blessed Son, justify us through Christ’s righteousness, and make us thy children by adoption; sanctify us by the influences of thy Holy

Spirit, and uphold us unto the end. We will trust in thee to do that for us which we cannot do for ourselves: we will repose in thee as an infant reposes on the breast of a tender mother. We renounce all our own merits, and cast them from us as filthy rags: we come unto thee wounded, sick, and loathsome: we fall at thy feet, and look humbly forward to a participation of thy mercy, because from thee we received the will to come; and because we are assured that thou wilt finish the work which thou hast begun.

“And now to God the Father, by whom those who shall finally be saved were chosen before the foundation of the world; to God the Son, through whom the elect are freely justified; and to God the Holy Ghost, by whom the sinner is regenerated, sanctified, and upheld to the end; be all glory and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.”

CHAPTER XI.

Q. *Rehearse the Articles of thy Belief.*

A. *I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth.*

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord ; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried ; he descended into Hell ; the third Day he rose again from the Dead : he ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right Hand of God the Father Almighty ; from thence he shall come to judge the Quick and the Dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; the holy Catholic Church ; the Communion of Saints ; the Forgiveness of Sins ; the Resurrection of the Body ; and the Life everlasting. Amen.

Q. *What dost thou chiefly learn in these Articles of thy Belief ?*

A. *First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world.*

Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all Mankind.

Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the elect People of God.

ON the young ladies assembling again at the manor-house, they amused themselves for a while in making their comments on the story of Lydia Howard ; when they all agreed in expressing their admiration of her character, and in reprobating the conduct of her husband.

“ My dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, “ I rejoice that you are able to see the excellence of

such Christian examples as I am enabled to set before you. What is particularly worthy of admiration in Lydia Howard, is her humility; and this excellent quality was the more estimable, as there appeared to be no weakness nor want of firmness in her mind. Where she saw her duty, she always pursued it, though perhaps on one occasion she might have done better, had she persisted in refusing the alliance proposed to her. But when a parent pleads in a case of this kind, it is hard for a daughter, and one so young especially, to resist."

In this manner the time passed, till the lady of the manor introduced the business of the day by requesting one of the youngest of the company to repeat the Apostles' Creed: which being done, she addressed the party to the following purpose.—"I have observed, my dear young friends, that you are always pleased when I propose to read a story to you. I do not blame the attachment you discover to agreeable and interesting narrative: but I should not wish you so far to indulge it as to lose your relish for drier discussions. The imagination is a noble quality of the mind, but it must not be indulged to the neglect of the reasoning powers. The Apostles' Creed must to-day form the subject of our consideration, as well as some other parts of the Church Catechism, which I fear it will be quite out of my power to elucidate by any narrative: nevertheless, I trust that what I have to say will obtain as much of your interest as the histories of Theodosia and Lydia Howard."

The young ladies smiled, and promised their attention. On which the lady of the manor proceeded to the explanation of the Creed, taking each article separately as she went on.

"A valuable old writer," said she, "thus speaks of the Apostles' Creed: 'This Creed, without controversy, is a brief comprehension of the objects of our Christian faith, and is generally taken to contain all things necessary to be believed.' And we may further add, that the articles of this Creed may be classed under three heads; viz. those which have respect to God the Father, those which relate to God the Son, and those which refer to God the Holy Ghost.

"There is one sentence only of this Creed," proceeded

the lady, "and that is the first in order, which speaks of God the Father. This glorious Person of the Godhead is described in Scripture as the Father of all things; who created all things, and preserveth all things; the first Person of the Blessed Trinity; the Almighty or Omnipotent God; the Maker of heaven and earth, with all their varied furniture of things visible or invisible.

"On the nature and attributes of the Father, many volumes have been written, and an eternity might be well employed in the contemplation of them. But I am withheld from saying more on this subject at present, because I shall have, I trust, frequent occasions to speak upon it in our future conversations: when I shall hope to unfold to you certain points in the conduct of God the Father towards his children on earth, which are calculated, if rightly understood, to fill every heart with sentiments of love and gratitude; and to shew that no love was ever like His love, who gave up his only Son for the redemption of the world.

"Leaving therefore this important subject to a future occasion, I will proceed to explain to you those parts of the Apostles' Creed which have reference to the second Person of the Trinity, thus described in the second Article of our Church—'The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father,' called by us Jesus or the Saviour, and Christ or the Anointed: this blessed Saviour was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and his coming to redeem mankind was shewn forth by a continued succession of types and emblems, which formed, as it were, a track of light through the long ages of heathen darkness, and which, being visible only to the faithful, became more and more clear, and more and more resplendent, until the hour arrived in which the shepherds of Bethlehem received the good tidings of great joy, which were to be communicated to all people, even the tidings of that Saviour's birth, who is Christ the Lord—the Lord of angels, and the Lord of men—the Lord of glory from heaven—the King of kings and Lord of lords.

"This blessed Saviour, as our Creed informs us in conformity with the Scriptures of truth, was made of a

Virgin, 'having no earthly father,' as a valuable old writer on these subjects expresses it; being formed by the Holy Spirit, and in his formation sanctified, and in his sanctification united to the world in such manner, that though perfect man as well as God, he was without sin.

"This sinless perfection is thus described in our fifteenth Article: 'Christ in the truth of our nature was made like unto us in all things, sin only except, from which he was clearly void, both in his flesh and in his spirit. He came to be the Lamb without spot, who by the sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the sins of the world: and sin (as Saint John saith) was not in him.'

"In this manner, God—the immortal, invisible, and eternal Lord God—"took man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man.' (*2nd Article of the Church of England.*) And in this nature which he took upon himself, even our nature, he suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.

"Much," continued the lady of the manor, "has been said on each of these last Articles; but I will not detain your attention upon them at present, particularly as they appear to me to want little explanation. But the passages which follow next, are by no means equally plain, viz. 'He descended into hell; the third day he rose again.'

"That portion of this article which relates to the descent into hell, did not form so ancient a part of the Creed as the latter clause. It was first used in the Church of Aquileia, about four hundred years after the Christian era; after which, it came gradually to be acknowledged as a part of the Apostles' Creed: and the Church of England, at the Reformation, made this one of the Articles of Religion, which all who are admitted to holy orders must subscribe. 'As Christ died for us, and was buried; so also is it to be believed, that he went down into hell.' (*3rd Article.*)

"Now, my dear young people," said the lady, "were

I to lay before you the various interpretations given at different times of this passage, I should only weary and perplex you: I shall therefore content myself with a simple statement of the sentiments of a certain valuable old writer, to whom I have already referred more than once during the course of our conversation this evening.

“ ‘By the descent of Christ into hell, all those who believe in him are secured from descending thither. He went into those regions of darkness, that our souls might never come into those torments which are there. Through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and by his actual descent into the dominions of him so destroyed, secured all which have an interest in him of the same freedom which he had. Thus he underwent the condition of the souls of such as die; and inasmuch as he died in the similitude of a sinner, his soul went to the place where the souls of men are kept who die for their sins: and so did wholly undergo the law of death. But because there was no sin in him, God suffered not his Holy One to see corruption, neither did he leave his soul in hell. Accordingly, in three days he rose again, and, after a certain period, ascended into heaven; and there will remain until he return to judge the earth.’ ”

“ These last articles of the Creed, which relate to the second Person of the Blessed Trinity, are thus represented in the fourth Article of our Church: ‘Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of man’s nature; wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.’ ”

The lady of the manor here paused a moment, and then remarked, that she hoped on a future occasion to enter somewhat more largely into the subject of the Second Advent of our Lord, and his future reign of glory upon earth. She also remarked, that there was not a single article of the Creed on which volumes might not be written; but that she had said the less on each particular point, trusting that her young hearers would have equal pleasure and profit in filling up, during the future part of their lives, that general outline of Christian knowledge which she was now endeavouring to lay down for

their use: and having thus spoken, she proceeded to that portion of the Apostles' Creed which refers to the third Person of the Holy Trinity.

"My dear young friends," said their excellent instructress, "I have so often explained to you in some degree the nature of the Trinity-in-Unity, that I can hardly think it necessary to repeat to you at this time, that the Lord the Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, or, as our fifth Article expresses it, 'The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.' This Holy Spirit is, as we have before said, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity—a Person not created, but a divine Person, properly and truly God. And inasmuch as in the work of man's salvation the Father took one part upon himself, and the Son another, so also the Holy Ghost has a peculiar office assigned him, which it is needful for every Christian to understand. This office, as I think I have before informed you, relates, first, to the calling of the sinner, whereby he is awakened from the death of sin, and brought to some apprehension of his perishing state; secondly, to his regeneration, or the renovation of his will, compared in Scripture to a new birth; thirdly, to his sanctification; and, finally, to his glorification. These are the operations of the Holy Spirit upon every individual who is to be finally saved. Moreover, it is this Holy Spirit which enables the regenerate person to persevere unto the end; and it is this Blessed Person of the Godhead who through all ages of the Church has endowed its ministers with those continued and fresh supplies of grace by which alone they were enabled to instruct and enlighten the people committed to their charge. And in proportion as this grace is still poured forth or withheld, the labours of the minister are fruitful or fruitless, as every faithful Christian pastor is ready to acknowledge. The principal emblems under which this Holy Spirit and its influences are described, are, first, the *wind* or *air*; as in St. John iii. 8.—*The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit*: secondly, *oil*; for which we have many Scripture authorities: and,

thirdly, *running brooks, fresh springs, rivers, and fountains*; which last emblems I shall probably have it in my power to elucidate to you, my dear young people," said the lady of the manor, "on many occasions during our future discourses."

The lady then proceeded to say something on those parts of the Apostles' Creed which remained for explanation: viz. "I believe in the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting."

"Persons who are ignorant of the true nature of religion," continued the lady, "differ very widely respecting the first of these articles which I have just repeated, not being able to come to any satisfactory conclusion concerning the real character of the Church; supposing either that there are many Churches, or that the true Church is only found in that peculiar congregation or connected with that particular mode of worship which they themselves have adopted. But leaving these fallible directors, and taking the New Testament for our guide, I will endeavour to give you what I suppose to be the real meaning of the expression: for which purpose it will be necessary to take notice, that our Saviour, when first speaking of the Church, mentioned it as a thing which was not then, but which was to be—*Thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church.* (Matt. xvi. 18.) And afterwards, when Peter had converted three thousand souls, it was said, *And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.* (Acts ii. 47.) From these texts, and from considering the circumstances of the followers of our Lord at that time, we may understand what is the true nature of the Church, such as it was when first established, and such as it now is, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years: namely, that its character is wholly spiritual; that it was at first composed of a certain number of men, of whom some were apostles, and some disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ; as well as of others who repented, believed, and were baptized, continuing to hear the Word preached, receiving the sacraments, and joining in the public prayers offered unto God, being all of one heart and one soul.

"This," continued the lady of the manor, "is the first

description given in Scripture of the Church. And although the sacred writers, when speaking of any country into which the Gospel had been carried, mention, by way of distinction, the Churches of that country—as, the Churches of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee—yet the Scriptures afford sufficient evidence that the several Churches or congregations of believers collected in great cities or extensive countries were considered as parts of one and the same Church, united under one head, and forming together one undivided congregation in the sight of God. If therefore the sacred writers considered all the separate congregations of one city as forming only one Church; then all the Churches of all the cities and countries under heaven may properly be comprehended under the same single denomination in relation to the one supreme Governor of them all: so that the Church of Christ includes all regenerate persons whatsoever, belonging to any congregation or assembly of Christians throughout the whole world. Thus it appears that the unity of the Church consists not in the observance of similar forms and ordinances, but in this circumstance, that it hath no other foundation than that which is laid in the Scripture, even Jesus Christ. Whence it comes to pass, that all such persons as are true members of the Christian Church, are also *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.* (Eph. ii. 19—21.) This stone was laid in Zion for a foundation, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation.

“We find then, my dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, “that the visible Church on earth is commensurate with the true invisible Church of Christ. In looking round upon the various denominations and congregations of Christians among us, although we may approve of the doctrines and usages of one more than those of another; although we may admire one minister and disapprove another; yet in every congregation so much corruption is to be observed, and so many things which might be improved, that when we hear men cry in the street, saying, Lo, here is Christ; or lo, there is

Christ; we should not allow ourselves to be persuaded that the presence of our common Lord is or can be confined to *this* or *that* Christian society. God is no respecter of persons, and an extensive acquaintance with his Word can hardly fail to afford us the delightful conviction, that in every congregation where the Gospel of Christ is faithfully preached, and perhaps in some where the light of divine knowledge doth not so visibly shine, the Almighty has his hidden yet chosen ones; even as in idolatrous Israel he had his sincere and faithful thousands who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

“But having detained your attention, my dear young people,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “a considerable time on this subject, I will go on to the next article, only previously remarking that the word Catholic means universal.”

The lady of the manor then proceeded to the next clause in the Creed: viz. ‘The communion of saints.’—“Now before this article can be rightly understood,” said the lady, “we must consider who are properly called saints. In Exodus xxii. 31, they are described as holy men. But where are these men of holiness? Which of us can say, I am clean from my sin; I am holy and pure; for I have made myself clean? No man with propriety can adopt this kind of language. Are there therefore no saints upon earth? And if there are, where are they to be found, and what is their real description? I answer, They are such as are sanctified in Christ Jesus; they are those to whom sin is not imputed; those, in one word, who have washed their garments and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. These are they, who, being reconciled to God, and having received the spirit of adoption, are enabled to call him Father, and to hold communion with him as with a friend or a brother.”

Here one of the young people ventured to remark, that she was entirely at a loss to conceive what was meant by this communion, and expressed a hope that her excellent teacher would not be offended if she requested a fuller explanation of this matter than that which had been already given.

The lady of the manor instantly complying with this request, proceeded to this effect—“When man first

came from the hands of his Maker, he was pure and without spot or stain of sin. At that period, while he remained in his original state, which we have reason to think was but a very short time, he held constant and close communion with his Maker. But the exact nature of this communion is not to be ascertained, since we can form but very obscure conceptions of a perfectly pure and sinless state. For if, in every imaginable scene of earthly happiness there is such a mixture of sin and sorrow, that the most lively narrative of earthly pleasure which fancy can devise leaves us ready to ask this question—Is this all? and is there no more to be said or done, to be hoped or enjoyed?—it may well be imagined that in every description of the highest attainable state of piety, holy love will be so imperfect, and religious fear occasionally so predominant, as to render our views of divine communion very incomplete and unsatisfactory. The lovely bowers of Eden were however at one time uncontaminated by sin; and during that blessed season the roses grew there without thorns, our newly created progenitors lived there as children at home in the presence of their heavenly Father, and divine love shed its sacred influence over the whole face of nature. But no sooner had sin entered those blissful regions than all nature underwent a fearful change: sentence of death immediately passed upon every living creature; and man instantly became so alienated from his Creator as to seek a hiding-place from his presence, just as a son conscious of having committed an unpardonable offence shuns the presence of the most tender and virtuous parent. In consequence of some remains of this natural sense of guilt, the whole human race has from that time looked upon their Creator with fear and dread, instead of exercising towards him that love and confidence which are due from the creature to his Maker.

“All idolatrous forms of worship throughout the world,” continued the lady of the manor, “have been, and still are, built upon the unconquerable fear and dread of some avenging Being whom the terrified worshipper desires to propitiate. Hence the gloomy rites of paganism, with the horrible views of death and judgment given in the Koran. Thus it may be proved, by

the representations which these idolaters and infidels have given of the Deity, that their ideas of him were the produce not of filial love, but of trembling terror. Neither has the unregenerate man in Christian countries any more inviting views of God than the Mussulmaun or idolater.

“Man,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “naturally hates God. *The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* (Rom. viii. 7.) The unrenewed soul has a sufficient sense of its own impurity to make it look on its Creator rather as an avenging Judge than a tender Father. Every reflecting mind in such a country as this, has light enough to know that the Supreme Being, must necessarily be immaculately pure; every conscious sinner, therefore, feels that he has much to dread from him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity; neither can he, through the mere light of reason, discover a way to escape his avenging hand.

“Thus,” continued the lady of the manor, “unhappy man has been separated from his heavenly Father, through the cruel devices of Satan; and no religion or system of morals on earth supplies the means of his restoration, but the religion revealed by Christ, who points himself out as the only way by which offending man can be restored to the divine favour—*I am, saith he, the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me.* (John xiv. 6.)

“And this way,” said the lady of the manor, “is not pointed out to us in a mere cold, dull, formal manner; but we are invited, we are entreated, we are pressed to enter upon this new and living way, in order to secure our final salvation. The Scripture saith, *Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out.* (John vi. 37.) Our blessed Saviour is a friend, who when he has sent out his invitations, will not easily be denied. How sweet, how affecting, how tender are his addresses to his people! Thus, through the blessed Saviour, miserable and lost creatures are brought back to their heavenly Father, and rendered meet to hold communion with him.

“If a king condescends to address a subject with affection and familiarity,” added the lady of the manor,

“how does that subject delight to make known to his friends and neighbours the honour conferred upon him! How accurately does he recollect all the gracious words of his sovereign, and with what satisfaction does he meditate upon their purport! How full he is of the praises of his king, and with what rapture does he speak of his comely appearance and his graceful demeanour! If then we consider it so high a privilege, in certain circumstances, to hold intercourse with one who is but a man of like passions with ourselves, and who in a short time must lay aside all his glory to become the food of worms; how much higher an honour should we count it to hold communion with the God of glory himself!”

Here the lady of the manor perceiving that one of her young pupils wished to speak, stopped a moment, and looked encouragingly at her. On which, the young lady ventured to say, that she still did not understand exactly what was meant by communion with God.

“Communion in general, my dear,” replied the lady of the manor, “signifies any kind of intercourse maintained between two or more persons, either by word of mouth, or by letter, or by any other means: but the nature of the communion thus maintained, must of necessity be suited to the nature of the persons between whom it subsists. Our communion with any corporeal being must be through the medium of the senses; by the voice, by the hearing, by the sight, or by some other sense: but God being a Spirit, our communion with him must needs be of a spiritual kind, and wholly independent of the senses. Concerning the distinct nature of this communion, it is indeed utterly impossible for me to give you any satisfactory idea, because this knowledge is hid in Christ. When you become experimentally acquainted with Christ, you will then understand what it is to hold spiritual intercourse with your heavenly Father; but until that period arrive, which I trust is not very distant, it would be impossible to make this matter clear to you, since the nature of this communion is a secret which a stranger meddleth not with. However,” proceeded the lady of the manor, “as I happen to be supplied with a narrative, in which the subject of divine communion is in some measure elucidated by facts of a very interesting nature, we will leave this point for the

present, and hasten to conclude our consideration of the Apostles' Creed, deferring our story to our next happy meeting, if we should be again permitted to assemble in this place."

The lady then proceeded to the explanation of the next clause in the Creed, viz. the forgiveness of sins. "It is the less necessary," said she, "to enlarge on this article, my dear young friends, inasmuch as the whole scope and tendency of all I have said, and all I desire to say to you, is, to point out the means by which this forgiveness of sins may be obtained. I shall therefore now content myself with repeating to you the thirty-first Article of our Church on this point, which is to this purpose: 'The offering of Christ once made, is that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifice of masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.'"

The resurrection of the body was the next subject which came in course under the consideration of the young people; and the lady of the manor spoke upon it to this effect: "This article," said she, "was anciently, and is now, universally acknowledged by all Christians. We find, by daily and painful experience, that all men are mortal; we have all seen the effect of death on some of those most dear to us on earth; we have seen the work of corruption and dissolution commence on the persons of those whom we once counted the loveliest and fairest in the creation; and we know, with respect to these, that this dreadful work has been carried on in the dark grave, till dust has literally returned to dust, and ashes to ashes. Neither doth it require much reflection, to convince us that nothing less than the infinite power of Him who first formed man out of the dust of the earth, can collect together the various parts of his body, however scattered, and intimately connect them again with the very same spirit by which they were formerly animated.

"The wise men and philosophers of old, though they doubted not the immortality of the soul, had no idea of

the resurrection of the body. We read of certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoicks, who encountered St. Paul; and when they heard of the resurrection, they mocked him, saying, that he seemed to be a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. (*Acts xvii.*) So far indeed the heathen philosophers judged rightly, that the raising up of the body from the dust of death is undoubtedly impossible to all created agents. But to God all things are possible; and since we are surrounded with so many wonderful evidences of his power, we have no reason to suppose that even this is above the reach of his omnipotent hand.

“More than this, we have innumerable assurances in Scripture of the resurrection of the body. The holy Job expressed his opinion on this subject in these remarkable verses—*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.* (Job xix. 25, 26.) In the New Testament also we have many passages on this subject of a very striking nature.—*For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.* (1 Cor. xv. 22.)—*Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.* (John v. 25.)—*And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.* (Matt. xxv. 32.)—*For we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.* (Rom. xiv. 10.)

“In addition to these,” said the lady of the manor, “there are passages without end in Scripture to the same purpose, which, if I were to attempt to point out, the time would fail me. Nevertheless, before we leave this subject, I think it right to state to you a certain opinion concerning the resurrection, held by many excellent persons, and founded on some remarkable passages in Scripture. The opinion is this—that there will be two resurrections, viz. that of the just, and that of the wicked. The passage on which this opinion is chiefly grounded may be found in the twentieth chapter of the Revelations, the fourth, fifth, and sixth verses.—*And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment*

was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.

“We have now,” continued the lady of the manor, “only one article left, which is this—‘The life everlasting.’ As there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, so we must understand that each will partake of an everlasting existence; the one of endless happiness, and the other of endless misery; the one being emphatically called a state of everlasting life, and the other a state of eternal death.

“In speaking of these two states, we shall first treat of the case of the wicked. These miserable persons, after the day of judgment, will not be consumed or annihilated, but will remain alive in soul and body, to endure the torments to be inflicted upon them by the justice of God for all the sins committed in the body. The passages of Scripture expressive of the state of the wicked in the world to come are to this effect——

“First—That the wicked shall be banished from the presence of God—

“I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. (Luke xiii. 27, 28.)

“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matt. xxv. 41.)

“Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 Thess. i. 9.)

“Secondly—That they shall be thrust into a state of pure unmingled torment—

“The rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried

and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (Luke xvi. 22—25.)

“Thirdly—That their punishment shall be without the most distant prospect of a period—

“Between us and you there is a great gulph fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. (Luke xvi. 26.)

“It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. (Mark ix. 47, 48.)

“But now,” said the lady of the manor, “we will turn from this dreadful subject to one of infinite hope and joy, namely, the consideration of the eternal happiness of the redeemed. The bodies of the saints, after the resurrection, shall be transformed into spiritual and incorruptible bodies—*The flesh is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.* (1 Cor. xv. 42—44.)

“In this spiritual and incorruptible body, the saints shall awake up in the divine likeness, and be for ever with the Lord—

“Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory. (John xvii. 24.)

“In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. (John xiv. 2, 3.)

“The saints in their glorified state shall mingle with the general assembly and Church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven; and who are thus described by the beloved apostle—

“I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man

could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. (Rev. vii. 9, 10.)

“Further, in this state of felicity the saints shall be privileged with an everlasting exemption from evils of every description—

“They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. (Rev. vii. 16, 17.)

“And now, my dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, “having gone over each article of the Creed at some length, I shall only request you particularly to remember, that from these articles of our Creed we, ‘First, learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made us, and all the world. Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed us, and all mankind. Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us, (that is, if we are of the number of the regenerate,) and all the elect people of God.’ I think it necessary, however, before I conclude, to recur to a certain remark introduced in the history of Lydia Howard; viz. that the whole of the Liturgy of the Church of England was composed on this supposition—that those who use it are converted persons; and thus the answers which are put in the mouth of the catechized person can only be properly employed by a true disciple of Christ, by one who has been chosen, regenerated, sanctified, and actually received among the people of God. But inasmuch as no human teacher is able to separate the wheat from the tares, the rulers of the Church are compelled to let them all grow together until the harvest, allowing the latter to enjoy all the privileges of cultivation and protection in common with the former. And since such is the ignorance, blindness, and incapacity of the spiritual husbandman, that he is incapable, in many instances, of distinguishing between the sincere Christian and the hypocritical professor, the compilers of our Liturgy, taking the side of charity, have

determined that all who partake of the public ordinances of the visible Church, shall be supposed to form a part of the invisible Church."

Here the lady of the manor, presuming that she had already said as much or more than would be accurately understood by her young people, closed her discourse for the evening by calling upon them to join her in solemn prayer to God.

A Prayer for Light and Illumination on all Doctrinal Subjects.

"O THOU BLESSED LORD GOD, who hast given all Scripture for our instruction, grant us so to read thy Holy Word, that we may be enabled rightly to receive and comprehend those sacred truths, the knowledge of which is especially necessary to our salvation. We are well assured that thy Holy Word is a dead letter to such as are not endued with the gifts and graces of thy Holy Spirit, while it binds together the servants of the Lord with bands that cannot be broken. Be thou pleased therefore to send thy Spirit into our hearts, that He may be unto us a remembrancer of all holy things, enriching our understandings with all that is excellent, and enabling us to cast out all that is evil from our hearts and imaginations.

"O Almighty God, too long have we lived in the indulgence of impure thoughts and unholy desires: assist us now, O Lord, to forsake and abhor them. Grant that the holy words which we have heard this day may sink deep into our hearts, and be as good seed received into good ground, bearing fruit an hundred fold. May our hearts become as the garden of the Lord, which being refreshed with the continual influences of the Holy Spirit, may become fragrant with all manner of spices, and well pleasing in thy sight.

"We lament and bewail, O heavenly Father, that ignorance and spiritual darkness in which we have hitherto continued: though from infancy accustomed to repeat the articles of our holy faith, we have closed our eyes and shut our hearts against the reception of their influence: in the midst of light, we have been lovers of darkness; and though daily hearing the

words of life, we have continued to abide in a state of death.

“O blessed Father, have pity upon us: draw us, and we will run after thee. Prosper thy word unto our souls: let it be in us a well of water springing up unto everlasting life, softening our hard and stubborn hearts, and enabling us to produce the fruits of a holy and godly life. And as we have received thy Holy Word, grant that we may make it our study all the day long, until all its glorious mysteries are revealed, until all its consoling promises are fulfilled, and until faith and hope are lost in glory.

“Now to God the Father,” &c.

CHAPTER XII.

Second Conversation on the Communion of Saints.

“WHEN we last met, my dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, on finding herself again surrounded by her amiable little circle, “we made the Apostles’ Creed the subject of our discourse, and I at that time promised you a narrative, in which the subject of *divine communion* is brought forward in a manner which I trust will both please and edify you.”

On hearing this, the young ladies smiled, and drew their chairs closer round the table, previous to the commencement of the story.

“I have already, my dear young people,” said the lady of the manor, “brought you acquainted with my beloved father, and his dwelling in the same parish with the Earl of N——, whose beautiful parks and venerable woods overran the whole neighbourhood, supplying a variety of exquisite natural scenes, such as the finest landscape painter would have found it difficult to represent with any degree of truth.

“In the deepest recesses of these woods, near the spot where a pure stream of water rushed abruptly from the higher grounds into a deep dingle, stood an old timber-built cottage, near which was a wooden bridge thrown from one side to the other of the narrow dell, in order to facilitate the passage of the traveller over the stream. On the opposite side the wood thickened so much that another cottage, which was situated among the trees, was only discernible by those who looked up the dingle, from its chimney and a small portion of its thatched roof which peeped from beneath the shade.

“In the first of these cottages lived one Henry Hart,

a very old man, when I was a little child, whose business was that of a wood-cutter. This man had in his youth been remarkably handsome; and when I first beheld him he exhibited the finest specimen I think I ever remember to have seen of comely and venerable old age. As he had from his youth been constantly exposed to the open air, every part of his face was ruddy, excepting that which had always been covered with his hat, which still retained the clear white of his natural complexion. His eyes, which were peculiarly fine, were so expressive that my father often confessed his astonishment at their being set in the head of a poor working man; and his regular features were set off by his milk-white locks, which hung in curls from his head. The old man was, however, so reserved in his manner, that my father had resided in the parish many years without ever being able to draw him out in conversation, although he had often tried to do so when meeting him by chance in the woods. Neither could any person in the parish boast of being better acquainted with him, for he lived in great solitude, his house being kept by a deaf old woman, with whom he seldom, as she said, entered into discourse, though he read the Holy Scriptures to her every night, and sometimes commented on them for her instruction. With other persons he never mixed, excepting on occasions of public service at the church, from which he seldom absented himself.

“My father, who much admired the appearance of this old man, and who could not but greatly regret his reserve, feeling, as he said, a strong persuasion that if the old man could but be induced to speak, he would be found more intelligent than persons in his situation commonly are, used to call him the Hermit of the Dale, and not seldom applied to him the words of the poet—

‘Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend hermit grew.’

But while we thought that my father was unreasonably ennobling a poor peasant by comparing him to the poet’s hermit, we, in fact, by such comparison, fell far short of the real worth and dignity of this old man’s character.

“I do not exactly recollect my age at the time, but at any rate I know that I was old enough to reason on

many things that passed, when Sunday-schools began to be first talked of. These were originally projected by a Mr. Raikes of Gloucester; and my father no sooner heard of them than he resolved to establish one in his parish. Lord N—— very kindly supplied a room for the purpose; but we were at a loss for some time about procuring a teacher. I recollect that my father, with my little assistance, supplied the place for some Sundays; but he soon found the labour too much for him in addition to his other Sunday duties: and I was altogether too young for such an undertaking.

“While we were in this perplexity, and could meet with no one whom we thought fit to place in this responsible situation, Henry Hart, to our great surprise, the reserved old man whom we had considered as a secluded hermit, came into the school-room, and with great humility offered his poor services, as he called them.

“I shall never forget his appearance on presenting himself before us. He wore a russet suit of clothes, his linen, though coarse, being clean and white: he had taken off his hat, and his grey hair was parted on his brow. He smiled while addressing my father, and said, he never should have presumed to offer himself for such a service, had any other person come forward.

“‘I think then,’ said my father, ‘if I am not much mistaken, we shall have reason to rejoice, Henry Hart, that no one else has come forward.’

“The old man bowed in reply, and lifted up his eyes as if in prayer, but said nothing.

“Henry Hart was immediately installed in his office as master of the little school. He was then sixty-five years of age, and he retained his situation ten years. My father was really astonished to find in this poor and retired old man such a depth of Christian knowledge and such a store of Christian experience as he had scarcely ever met with through the whole course of his life.

“In consequence of his situation as master of the Sunday-school, my father had an opportunity of frequent conversation with him; and the old man, as is commonly the case with persons of very silent and retired habits, when he became accustomed to my father, became also particularly open and unreserved. Neither was my father ashamed to acknowledge that he was often very

much the better for his conversation. However, notwithstanding the frequent exchange of sentiments which passed between Henry Hart and my father, the latter never became acquainted with the real history of this old man, till a few months before his death, which happened in his seventy-sixth year, exactly ten years from the time of his first undertaking the charge of the Sunday-school—an office which he had discharged with great advantage to the parish, it having pleased God to bless his instructions to the everlasting benefit of many souls.

“Henry Hart died at the latter end of the month of February, after having been confined to his house for several months, during which my father had been his constant visitor. It was in this interval, that my father induced him to give an account of his life; and finding that it abounded with circumstances of interest, he failed not to commit it to paper, for the edification and amusement of those into whose hands it might chance to fall.”

The lady of the manor then opened a little manuscript, and read as follows.—

The History of Henry Hart; related by himself.

“My father,” said Henry Hart, “was employed by the father and grandfather of the present Lord N——, as wood-cutter. There was not a man in all the country who was a better judge of timber than my father: he was moreover an upright man in all his dealings, and was accordingly much accounted of by his lord; inso-much, that a tree was seldom cut down for sale without his approval. For Lord N—— and those that went before him,” said the old man, “jealous of the honour of their family, which had so long been served by my father and his father, have never resembled the improvident spendthrifts of the present day—who deprive the groves of their ancient glories, and cut off the hopes of rising forests, to satisfy the cravings of such as administer to their ruinous propensities. No, Sir,” added the hoary headed peasant, addressing my father, and gathering animation as he proceeded, “not a tree has ever been cut down in these woods since the memory of man, till it has attained the perfection of its growth, and not

even then, unless another was rising up by its side to fill its place. I can safely assert this, because, with the exception of our family, and by chance another or so under our direction, no man ever ventured to lift an axe in these forests. My father, as I have said, was accustomed almost all his lifetime to work alone, and not in company with others. And as his jobs, for the most part, lay in solitary and retired situations, where he heard no sound but that of the strokes of his own hatchet and their echo, he became, towards his old age especially, a man who thought more than he spoke; and from following the same mode of life, I myself fell very much into the same habit in this particular. But more of this hereafter.

“I was born in this cottage, where, to all appearance, I am like to die. My mother, who was as tender a parent as child ever had, died when I was about twelve years of age, leaving my father to take charge of me and a brother who was about two years older than myself. As we had been instructed in reading at the parish school, and were, for persons in our station, tolerably good scholars, after my mother’s death my father took us entirely from school, when he put my brother apprentice to a miller, while he kept me with himself to assist him in his work in the woods.

“Now just over the stream, on the other side of the dingle, across the bridge, as you well know, Sir, stands a cottage, which, to appearance, is as old if not older than this, if one may judge by the wood-work round the fire-place, which is cut and carved in a strange manner; as well as by some panes of painted glass still remaining in the kitchen-window, which folks do not scruple to say, were taken from the windows of an old monastery when the Papists were driven out of the country, in the days of our Queen Elizabeth. However that be, the house is a very old one, not many such I believe being now to be seen.

“When I was a child, this cottage was occupied by one Robert Gray, by trade a thatcher, a very decent, quiet man. His wife, who was called in the parish Amy Gray, was a very hard-working clean woman, and remarkable for exercising such a degree of authority in her family, that is over her young people, as is seldom witnessed in these days.

“In this family,” added the old man, repressing a sigh

while he spoke, "lived two of the fairest damsels eye ever beheld. The one was Bessy Bell, the niece of Amy Gray, and the other Mary Gray, her daughter. I say, the sweetest damsels ever seen; for I never now certainly see any who are worthy to be named on the same day with what I can recollect of these: whether it is that I now view all earthly things with an eye freed from passion; or whether earthly love, being but the child of fancy, is not now helped forward by the retirement in which the good women kept their daughters in former days—so contrary to that we see at present, even among persons of distinction. But to leave these matters.

"Amy Gray was exceedingly careful of her young people, and would not suffer them to look out of their doors unless in her presence; and when compelled to go out on any business, she always left the door locked. If by chance I walked by at such times, I could never hear their voices, though I might distinguish the hum of their spinning-wheels. And as to seeing them through the window, the painted glass I have before spoken of would have prevented that, had I presumed to come so near to them. But these lovely and modest young women, though kept so strictly, never let it appear to any one that they felt the yoke; nay, they yielded most patiently and sweetly to all their careful parent and guardian required of them, though assuredly they could not then understand all the reasons she had for thus guarding and watching them.

"It was not to be supposed that two young boys, living near these fair damsels, should not discover their beauty and modesty. My brother fixed his heart on Bessy Bell, but the other pleased me most; and though I seldom interchanged a word with her, I cannot remember the time when I did not love Mary Gray.

"The keen-eyed mother was soon aware of the preference we gave these young people; on which account she took especial care that we should seldom see them: and so good a look-out did she keep, that it often happened that I never could get a glimpse of them from Sunday to Sunday again. But on that day, I always placed myself, in my best suit, upon the wooden bridge, over which they must needs pass to church: and, after I had enjoyed the pleasure of making my bow to them

as they went by, I regularly followed them at a modest distance to and from church; for nearer I did not dare to approach.

“I still remember, for it is fixed upon my memory in a manner which cannot be worn out,” proceeded the old man, “the figures of the father and mother in their Sunday dress, and that of the two beloved young women who followed. At that time they generally wore a dress of a kind of russet brown, short and full, with a white apron and handkerchief, a plaited cap, and a flat straw hat tied behind. Bessy Bell was exceedingly fair, with cheeks as red and blooming as a rose, and her laughing eyes of the finest blue. But Mary—my beloved Mary—had hair resembling threads of gold, while every feature was lovely beyond description. Her eyes were dark and brilliant, and when she bent them down, her long eyelashes cast a sweet and modest expression over her whole countenance, the like to which I never shall behold again.

“As she passed over the bridge on the occasions I speak of, I sometimes ventured to wish her a good morning, or to present her with a posy: upon which her mother seldom failed to call out, in a forbidding tone of voice, ‘Come on, my girls; why do you linger behind? what are you standing to talk about?—I beg, young men, that you will not intrude yourselves upon us as often as we pass this way.’

“In this manner we were generally accosted, neither did we presume even by gesture or look to shew our discontent: for the age of insubordination was not then come, the period in which children openly deride the authority of their parents, and in which the daughters of respectable families make themselves cheap by breaking through all the restraints of modesty and decorum.

“But as I am not going, my good Sir, to trouble you with a long account of the early part of my time, I shall simply state, that my brother and I, when arrived at an age to speak of such matters, made our regard for these young damsels known to our father, who mentioned it to Robert Gray and his wife: upon which it was agreed among the old people, that my brother should wait for Bessy till he had served out his time; and that as I and Mary Gray were still younger than the other couple, we

should wait seven years, during which I was to engage in service and endeavour to save a little money in order to set us up in the world.

“Being well contented with this arrangement of matters, my father, by the kind help of my Lord’s steward, got me a place in the house of a gentleman, where I acted as a footman. In this place I acquired some degree of mental improvement, though not in a religious way. My master observing that I was fond of reading, lent me many books, and gave me not a few; some of history, others of voyages and travels, and others works of fiction. I had also an opportunity of hearing much polished discourse while I waited at table; in addition to which I travelled into many distant countries with my master.

“In this manner the seven years passed away; at the end of which I returned home, true as the needle to the north, to seek the object of my life. I learned that my brother had been married two years or more to Bessy Bell, and I found my beloved Mary looking even more to my mind than when I had left her. At this time being allowed to talk to her, I was as much pleased with the sweetness of her disposition as with her beauty. I now had opportunity to perceive that she was truly pious; and I might also have understood that much of that sweetness in her which had so powerfully won my love, was the effect of her piety. But this discovery did not affect me as it ought: I knew but very little of religion, and therefore had very little sense of its value. As every thing that she did pleased me; so her piety was, I thought, a very becoming quality. But I had no more notion of learning my religion from her, than of being taught by her to card and spin.

“Such were my loose and confused notions of religion and the value of my soul at that time. How my beloved Mary became acquainted with true religion I have often since considered; for her parents, though decent and respectable persons, were ignorant, I think, on this point. She must assuredly have been divinely taught. Her Bible had supplied her with the only visible means of instruction; and such was the simplicity and humility of her mind, that she was not aware of being in a more enlightened state than that of other persons about her who

used the common forms of religion, and observed the common decencies of life. This view of her character," proceeded Henry Hart, "has been an after one. At the time I speak of, when I was first admitted to her society, I could neither feel nor talk rationally about her: she seemed to me the fairest and most delightful of human creatures, but why or wherefore I could not exactly say.

"I was made most happy in the possession of this beloved wife soon after my return from service, and settled with her in my father's house, who very kindly entertained us. Not long after this, many changes took place among our connexions. Robert Gray and his wife removed to some distance, in order to be near a son of the old man's by a former wife, who was able to afford them some assistance; and my poor father died after a very short illness. Thus, in a few months after our marriage, I was left alone with my young and lovely wife; all our old friends being by one means or other separated from us, and my brother's family removed to a little distance.

"I followed my father's business, and my wife her usual occupation of spinning; and for two complete years I enjoyed a degree of happiness, which even now, at this distant period, I hardly dare to think upon. For there are indeed some few intervals, some little events, some passing scenes of my life, good Sir," said Henry Hart, "which I cannot recollect, although passed away and gone long ago, without experiencing such a sinking at heart, that I turn from them with a struggle, and endeavour to banish from my mind every recollection of them—still indulging a full assurance, that in the world to come it will be found that every distressing, every touching, every wounding, yea even the most acutely wounding dispensations, were all so arranged as to work together for my good.

"My beloved wife, soon after our first married year was completed, informed me that she hoped to make me a father. This circumstance seemed to be all that was wanting to complete my happiness: and thus I blindly rejoiced in the prospect of that event which, when it took place, completely destroyed my earthly peace. But before I proceed to relate this sad catastrophe, I

should say, that my wife, notwithstanding her amiable simplicity and ignorance of life in general, was not long married to me before she found out that I had not those views of religion which she possessed. How it came to pass that she did not discover this before, I can hardly say; unless that, without intending it, I had played the hypocrite with her, and, through the excess of my love, had fallen in with every thing she said, be the subject what it might. However, as soon as she made this discovery, she lost no time as much as in her lay to remedy the evil, but made haste to use all her gentle powers of persuasion in leading me to an attentive perusal of the Scriptures, to social prayer, to a strict attendance on divine worship, and to every other pious exercise which she judged would tend most to my conversion. I failed not to follow as she led, for love bore down all unwillingness before it; and I even half persuaded myself that I was become exceedingly pious, while I was in fact only accommodating myself to the pleasure of the wife I loved. During this time, however, I obtained much head-knowledge, which knowledge I afterwards found very serviceable to me.

“But I come now, though with a shuddering kind of reluctance, to that sad period of my life, on which even at this day I can hardly allow myself to dwell: but I will pass it over as quickly as possible.—The time when my wife expected to bless me with a child at length arrived; and I had the extreme happiness of seeing her laid in her bed, with a little son in her arms. We had been up during the whole night on account of my wife’s illness, and at eight o’clock in the morning, being two hours later than usual, I went to my work, full of sweet hope and joy, and without any apprehension.

“As I went out of the door, I turned again for something I had forgotten; and as it lay in the room where my wife was, I lingered a while to look again on her I so tenderly loved, and the child she had so lately given me. The infant and its mother were both asleep, lying calm and easy; and while I gazed upon them I thought I never loved my wife so much. The nurse was in the room with them, and the nurse’s daughter in the room below. As I left the house, I desired the young woman to call me if any thing should be wanting, pointing out the place

in a coppice near at hand where I should be at work. O! with what a light heart did I go abroad that day; singing with careless glee as I stepped along! and how blithely moved the arm that lifted the hatchet! I spent that morning two such hours in the wood as I never knew again for many, many years; though my joy was not, I am well assured, of the right character. No: it wanted to be purified. The Lord knew this: he knew that it was not such as would work for my good, and therefore he deprived me of it.

“About ten o’clock, I thought I heard a voice calling me from a distance; I threw down my hatchet, full of apprehension; I hurried on my coat; I listened, and heard the nurse’s daughter calling me by name. I flew to meet her. She told me that my wife was taken suddenly ill, and begged me to run to the village for the doctor. I made all possible haste, but before I could bring the needful help she was dying. Her complaint was supposed to be some kind of cramp or spasm.

“Thus I lost the delight of my eyes at the moment when she was, if possible, become more dear to me than ever; and her precious infant, being deprived of a tender mother’s care, had scarcely received the baptismal blessing, before it was laid in the same grave with her who had died in giving it being. Oh! my wife! my wife! my son! my son! With the extinction of life only shall I cease to feel, upon every reflection, a portion of the agonies which I endured at the loss of these beloved ones! I had then no vital religion to support me; I knew no Saviour, no heavenly Father, no Holy Spirit.

“Eighteen years or more passed from that time, before it pleased the Lord to open my mind on these subjects; and till that period, I knew no comfort, a deep gloom almost amounting to despair having taken entire possession of my mind. During that interval I would see none of my former friends, unless it became unavoidable. I shunned even my brother; for the sight of his happiness with his Bessy and her children, was as a dagger piercing through my heart. I was not aware of the great impiety of such a state of mind; for I was then dead in sin. They who have faith feel a constant assurance that all things work together for the good of those whom the Lord is training up to glory, honour, and immortality;

whether it be affliction, whether it be temptation, whether it be reproach, whether it be prosperity, whether it be adversity, all—all unite together, under the influence of a gracious Providence, for perfecting the salvation of the chosen vessels of the Lord. But concerning these things I was in utter darkness.

“From the time of my child’s funeral, which happened when I was in my twenty-sixth year, I continued in the same gloomy and miserable state of mind till I had attained the age of forty-four or forty-five. There belonged to my original character a kind of constancy or inflexibility which was not easily to be shaken. This appeared in the attachment I had formed in my youth, which suffered neither variation nor abatement through seven years’ absence from its object; and it now again appeared in my long and sullen melancholy—a melancholy which was probably increased and fostered by my peculiar mode of life, which, as I before said, was that of a wood-cutter, and which for the most part obliged me to work alone in solitary situations, where for days together I never heard any sound but that which arose from the strokes of my own hatchet, and the shaking of the branches of those trees which were falling by my own hand. If in some situations these strokes were answered by an echo, this sound only added to my sense of loneliness and solitude. From the time that the door closed on the coffins of my wife and child, I had never allowed another inmate to partake of my solitary dwelling; and I may say, that from thenceforward I had no comfort by my fireside but that which I got from reading.

“My master had given me several books, which I read over and over again by my fireside in the winter evenings; and when I had exhausted these, which were, for the most part, books of mere amusement, I applied to my lord’s steward to lend me more, which he very kindly did, although not without bantering me upon my love of solitude, and advising me to take another wife—a piece of advice with which I felt myself greatly offended. I did not, however, venture to shew my displeasure to the steward, especially as he was so kind as to supply me with that sort of pastime which was most to my mind. The books which the steward was so kind as to lend me, were of various sorts, most probably such as came next

to hand. But there were few of a religious nature, and those of a wrong sort; such as held up works in the place of faith—a doctrine which had at that period been brought much into fashion, both in books and sermons; owing, no doubt, to the misguided conduct of those who had brought faith into disgrace, by talking without doing, and who ornamented their priests' garments with the golden bells, while they omitted the pomegranates, whereas the Lord had given directions that both should be used, for the purpose of completing the glorious habit of those who were appointed to the ministry.

“In this manner I continued to read and fill my head with various kinds of knowledge not common to a poor man: and the hours which I spent in pursuing my solitary calling were constantly devoted to ruminating and reflecting on those things which experience had taught me, as well as on those which I had learned from books; and still the more I reflected, the more I wondered at that confusion of good and evil which I perceived to happen alike to all men, and for which I could by no means account by the exercise of my own reason. Thus I gradually became to all intents and purposes, though but a poor solitary wood-cutter, as finished an infidel as those men who nailed the Lord of All to the accursed tree, and who bribed the soldiers to deny that resurrection which they had witnessed with their own eyes.

“On these occasions, how often did I lament the death of my son; and how often was I constrained to cry out within the hearing of none but God, ‘Alas, my child! my child! Had but my son survived, I should not have been thus wholly destitute and forlorn! I should have had at least one tie to the world remaining—one dear memorial of my Mary—one existing object of my love!’ But I have since had abundant reason to see and feel the goodness of the Almighty in taking this little precious one from me in his early infancy. For, considering the state in which I remained for eighteen years after his birth, how corrupt a teacher would he have found in me! And when it pleased the Lord to open my eyes, as he did at the time and in the manner I am about to shew you, it might then have been beyond my power to lead him in the way which I myself had

just been taught to discern. But leaving these reflections, which you, good Sir, may make more justly than I can, I return to my story.

“After entering my forty-fifth year, I was one day, about the season of Midsummer, sent by my lord’s order to his estate in the next parish, where I was directed, among other jobs, to fell a tree which stood on the side of a brook which turned the very mill in which my brother was foreman. The tree stood, as it were, about a bow-shot below the mill, and my brother’s cottage right over against the mill, and somewhere about the same distance from the spot upon which I was employed. The season of the year in which this happened I well remember by this token, that while I was preparing to work, a cuckoo sat upon a neighbouring tree, and continued her cry till disturbed by the noise I made with my hatchet, upon which she took fright right over my head.

“My sister, Bessy Hart, who proved a tender wife to my brother, had always shewn a great desire to be kind to me, not only for my wife’s sake, whose memory she dearly loved, but for my own, as her husband’s brother, and one whom she had known from a boy. Nevertheless, I never could be persuaded to come within her door, because the sight of her was calculated to renew my bitterest recollections. I have however since that time been made to see the impropriety of giving way to such feelings, inasmuch as they partake greatly of the nature of rebellion against the divine decrees, to which we owe the most implicit and cheerful submission, if from no higher principle, yet assuredly from the persuasion which we ought to have, that he who is our Father *will not cast off for ever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.* (Lam. iii. 31—33.) But I had no idea at that time of the covenant mercies of God. I saw the Deity in that point of view in which every natural man beholds him—in the light of an inexorable judge. I had the very feeling which constrained the first offenders to seek a hiding-place from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden: and, in compliance with that feeling, I habitually fled from the contemplation of

God, encompassing myself with my own vain conceits and false opinions.

“As I had hitherto shunned my brother’s family, I now hoped that I should be able to finish my work in that place without their knowledge; and with this view I hastened to accomplish it, though with many fears lest the noise of my hatchet might reach them, and bring me and my occupation to their minds. While I was thus engaged, a young man of a pleasing aspect, and dressed in a black coat, came down the bank, and passed by me with a book in his hand, on which he looked from time to time, as if committing its contents to memory. He saluted me very civilly as he passed, and then went on towards a neighbouring wood.

“After continuing my work till near dinner-time and seeing no one else, I hoped I might complete my task, for that day at least, unregarded. But just as I was preparing to take my bread and cheese out of my bag for my solitary dinner, my brother’s eldest daughter, who was a little older than my son would have been had he lived, came down the side of the brook towards me, carrying her youngest brother, an infant of about two years old, in her arms. She came smiling up to me, and accosting me by the familiar appellation of uncle, invited me in her mother’s name to come in and dine with them.

“This young girl was just in the bloom of beauty, and, though resembling her mother, was not altogether unlike my ever beloved Mary; her voice especially resembled my Mary’s: and the child she held in her arms was exceedingly lovely. I looked at both with a degree of agony I could not suppress, and asked her roughly who told her I was there?

“‘We heard your hatchet, uncle,’ she replied. ‘And my mother sent me out to seek for you.’

“‘Go,’ I answered, ‘and tell your mother I cannot come into her house and see her surrounded with so many blessings, while mine are perished in the grave.’

“‘Nay, but, uncle,’ said the young girl, ‘we cannot help that: and if you would let us, we would be your children, and our father and mother would be your comforters.’

“‘Go, child,’ I said, ‘and tell your parents they cannot comfort me.’

"She looked at me for a moment, and then wiped away her tears with the corner of her apron.

"I could not bear this; but taking up my hatchet, which lay by my side, I dashed it from me, uttering an expression of lamentation and despair which I cannot now remember.

"The girl turned from me with fresh floods of tears, and walked slowly back to the cottage. And at the same minute, I heard myself accosted to this purpose.—'My good man, what has happened? You seem to be distressed. Can I give you any advice or assistance? If so, command me.'

"I looked round, and saw the person mentioned above as having passed by a short time before with a book in his hand. He now stood close to me with a small purse in his hand, out of which he was taking some money, evidently with the intention of offering it to me.

"'Money!' I said, 'money! what can money do for one like me? Tell me, Sir,' I added, 'will money bring the dead to life? If so, I shall thankfully receive it.'

"He immediately put up his purse, and took his Bible out of his pocket, meekly answering, 'No, my good man, money assuredly cannot do this; but faith, which cometh by hearing the Word of God—faith can do more.'

"My attention was excited by this extraordinary address, and I listened silently as he proceeded.

"'You are probably,' said he, 'under the pressure of some great affliction, and have no comforter. Perhaps you do not even know where to seek consolation. yet whatever your trials may be, there is assuredly suitable comfort prepared for you; and the Almighty, I trust, will make you willing to receive it.' He then quoted several texts to me, which I have often since looked out for myself, and which have often yielded me wonderful support:—*This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.* (Psalm cxix. 50.) *Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.* (Rom. xv. 4.) *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to pro-*

claim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn. (Isaiah lxi. 1, 2.)

“Having finished these verses,” continued Henry Hart, “he proceeded to observe that the Lord of heaven and earth had provided consolation for the afflicted, and that he himself had undertaken to administer it with his own hand; adding that there was no affliction incident to man beyond the reach of his consolatory aid.

“It was perhaps with a feeling of curiosity, and a desire for the moment to be diverted by any thing from my own miserable sensations, that I was at first inclined to lend a listening ear to what this gentleman had to offer; for I soon distinguished that the person who addressed me was a gentleman, though his dress was threadbare and bespoke but slender means. As I listened, however, I became interested; and, after a while, it pleased the Lord so to touch my heart through his instrumentality, that I could not restrain my tears—a circumstance which had not happened to me before for years.

“Now, were I to repeat to you, my good Sir, all that this excellent person said to me, I should require days for that which I hope to complete in a very few hours. Suffice it to say, that he did not leave me that morning before he had excited within me a desire to seek for consolation from my Bible. He gave me such a view of the Lord Jehovah, the blessed Three in One, as I had never before received. He pointed out to me especially the love which had been shewn to all mankind, by God the Father, in sending his Son to die for them; by God the Son, in having undertaken to offer himself up a sacrifice for their sin; and by God the Holy Ghost, in his perpetual though invisible efforts for man’s salvation in producing that change of heart without which no man can enter the kingdom of heaven.

“These things all appeared entirely new to me, and, with the divine blessing, effected a considerable change in the whole state of my feelings; and more especially so, when I was enabled to see in those sore afflictions, which I had hitherto considered as cruel dispensations, nothing more than the salutary and needful chastisement of a tender Father. I cannot tell you how many hours

this pious gentleman sat conversing with me. Suffice it to say, that, before he departed, he informed me that he was minister of the parish in which I then was, and invited me not only to come every Sunday to his church, but to take my dinner at his house ; promising to renew his discourse with me every evening upon these matters. I accepted the invitation, and during the space of ten years was a constant attendant on his ministry. And whereas it was far for me to go home on a winter's evening after the last service, I was constrained at that season of the year to take a bed in the good minister's house, which afforded me further opportunity of receiving instruction.

“ This gentleman, though polished in his habits, was poor, having a very slender provision ; and being only a curate, he lived always, as the old custom was for persons in his situation, in his neat kitchen, having an elderly decent person for his housekeeper. His time was divided between his private studies, his devotions, and his parochial duties. Even his ordinary meals were sanctified by the word of God and by prayer.

“ I found exceeding great delight in the company of this holy young man, and had occasion indeed to love and value him highly, since he laid himself out very earnestly for my benefit, and my heavenly Father was pleased mightily to bless his instructions to my lasting good. He first began, when become a little better acquainted with me and with my history, by endeavouring, through the divine help, to convince me that I had hitherto lived altogether as an infidel, and just as a man would live if there were no God in the world : and at the same time he laboured to make me understand, that all which had hitherto befallen me, had been intended for my good, and the good of those I best loved. It is true, that on these points I for a long time resisted all conviction ; till at length, under the influence of divine grace, my stubborn heart began to yield : upon which I was speedily brought to perceive the truth of all he asserted, and from that time was more easily instructed to comprehend the leading doctrines of our holy religion. Nevertheless, as I had led a very decent moral life since my dear wife's death, my kind instructor found much difficulty in bringing me to a thorough acquaintance with

my real circumstances ; insomuch that it was a considerable time before he could make me understand, that the gloomy and sullen state of mind, in which I had long indulged myself, was the effect of an evil and rebellious heart. But, after a while, it pleased the Lord to open my mind on this subject also. And no sooner was I led even into a moderate acquaintance with the plague of my own heart, than I began gradually to discover the need of all those afflictions which I had been called to endure. And thus, step by step, my bewildered mind was opened first upon one thing, and then upon another, till at last the whole system of the Lord's providences was made plain to me, that is, as far as it was necessary for me to know it.

“And now, that is, from the time in which I began to have some heart-knowledge of religion, may I begin to date my progress from deep sorrow to peace, nay to happiness : for after I had entertained religious thoughts and feelings for a short season, through the divine mercy my tears were insensibly dried up, and my sorrow converted into joy.

“But although I describe this change in a few words, yet I would have you to understand, my dear Sir,” continued the old man, “that it was by no means so speedily effected as that circumstance might lead you to suppose. It was a long while before I could make up my mind on any new point of doctrine, especially on the subject of man's depravity, and of my own in particular. There I stood a tedious time, trying to make out some righteousness of my own ; and when it pleased the Almighty to give me conviction on this point, nearly as long a season was spent before I could embrace the offered Saviour, or apply the promises to my own case. And, more than this, when I was at length enabled to taste the consolations of the Gospel, my views of God the Father remained for a long time very unsatisfactory and perplexing. I felt that I could trust and love the Son ; but the Father was still a stranger to me ; and I could not help continually crying, with Philip, *Lord, shew me the Father, and it will suffice me.* (John xiv. 8.) However, as I learned to know my Saviour more, this difficulty disappeared, and I found in Christ that knowledge of the Father which is hid in him and in him only : for he that seeth him, seeth the Father also.

“On being thus far advanced, my blessed and holy guide endeavoured to bring me better acquainted with the third Person of the Trinity: and this he did by pointing out how near this Holy Spirit is to us, and how great things he had done for me especially, inasmuch as without his assistance I should have remained in that deep spiritual darkness in which the greater part of my life had been spent, and from which no human power was sufficient to extricate me. For although a human agent had been employed as the visible means of my conversion, the efforts he had used were found totally inadequate to the end they were intended to bring about, and must have entirely failed, had they not been accompanied by the influences of the Spirit.

“As the influence of religion became more and more powerful upon my mind,” continued the old man, “I gradually found peace. I cannot pretend to ascertain the day when I obtained perfect peace, as many undertake to point out the hour and moment of their conversion: for the change was, in fact, so slow, that I was myself hardly aware of its progress, or how my grief first began to soften down; though I am inclined to think that my true conversion took place about the time when I first began to look on God the Father through the medium of his Son, and to feel that all he had done proceeded not from anger but from love.

“After being enabled, through grace, to perceive and lament the depravity of my heart, I began to discover that my afflictions, instead of being greater, had been far less than I deserved; that my keenest distresses had been accompanied with many consoling circumstances; and that I had abundant cause to rejoice in the reasonable assurance that my wife and child were now rejoicing, through the merits of their Redeemer, in a state of perfect felicity.

“Thus was I imperceptibly led on, as it were, step by step, from sorrow to joy; till, after a while, when I looked for my troubles, behold they were passed away as the snow in harvest.

“And now, although I still loved solitude, and my manner of life rendered it in some measure necessary, I did not avoid the company of my relations; but I was more particularly delighted with the society of my friend

the minister, as well as with that of certain poor godly people who frequented his house. And from this time, how sweet, how abundant in delights, did the whole face of the earth appear to me, and especially those wild yet quiet spots to which my business constantly carried me ! All nature, which formerly seemed to frown upon me, now presented me every where with emblems of the divine love, and perpetually invited me to hold communion with the great Author of all.

“ My spiritual pastor also, by whom I mean the pious and benevolent friend with whom I was every Sunday an inmate, used much earnestness in pressing upon me the duty of seeking this divine communion or spiritual intercourse with the Holy Persons of the Trinity. ‘ This duty and privilege,’ said he, ‘ from which the captive in the dungeon cannot be excluded by his galling chains, is too often sought after with much indifference even by those whom we have reason to think regenerate ; a circumstance that proves how very far man is fallen from that blessed state of innocence, in which he was originally created, when, no doubt, he considered it as the highest enjoyment of which he was capable, to commune with his Creator. Moreover, this very circumstance shews how entirely changed we must be before we are admitted into that blessed state, the supreme happiness of which consists in being one with Christ.

“ ‘ But this duty,’ continued he, ‘ I particularly press upon you, Henry Hart, because your daily labour leads you into solitude ; because you dwell alone ; and because you have opportunities above most men of reading the book of nature, and consequently of lifting up your heart from the works of the Creator to the Creator himself.’

“ He then explained to me the especial nature of this communion, as it related severally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit ; plainly discovering to me how communion with the Father is held in the faith, love, and obedience yielded unto him by the saints ; with the Son, by election in him, by their kindred with his humanity, and by a participation of his Spirit ; and with the Holy Ghost, through his secret influences on the heart, which every true Christian must necessarily feel, though he may not possess the power of describing them. ‘ For I believe,’ said this pious and humble mi-

nister, 'it not seldom happens, that even when, through the divine help, comparatively correct ideas of spiritual things are excited in the believer's mind, the capacity of imparting them in any adequate degree to others, is denied; and that not only through the imperfection of language, which, being especially accommodated to our temporal concerns, is less fitted for the conveyance of heavenly notions; but also, perhaps, in order to humble the pride of man, and to make him feel his dependence upon that glorious Person who is the only effectual teacher of heavenly things.'

"This excellent man then proceeded to point out to me the manner in which the Holy Scriptures state the condition of man on earth.—'They describe him,' said he, 'as a creature originally formed in the image of Him who created him, but through the delusions of Satan unhappily fallen from his original perfection into a state of extreme depravity; insomuch that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his natural good works to faith. And not only is man thus utterly helpless, weak, and ignorant, but he has at the same time a natural enmity against God; so that the unregenerate man abhors his Creator, and flies from his presence as an offender flies from the face of a just and angry judge. He is also rebellious in his will, as well as dark in his mind, being as it were totally dead to his real interests, and especially to all the concerns of his soul. To man in this state redemption is proclaimed, as accomplished by God himself; a free redemption, a redemption unsought, yea undesired, a full, powerful, and mighty redemption, beyond the ability of any created being to procure. This redemption is all of grace, all of mercy, gratuitously bestowed without regard to merit, flowing freely forth from the fountain of eternal love.

"My spiritual and friendly teacher then directed me to the different parts and offices which the sacred Persons of the Trinity perform in the wonderful work of man's salvation; which necessarily carried us back to the subject of divine communion, and by the repeated consideration of which I was introduced to a state of happiness inconceivable to me before.

"By frequent conversations of this nature," continued the old man, "I found my heart insensibly drawn to-

wards the meditation of heavenly things, and daily rendered more and more meet for that holy intercourse with God of which my friend spoke with so much warmth: insomuch that, after a while, my mind took this bent so strongly, as enabled me to spend whole days in the woods, uninterruptedly employed in divine contemplations. There were times, indeed, when my mind became comparatively dark, cold, and dead, unfitting me for those divine enjoyments with which I was favoured on other occasions. Nevertheless, vile and unworthy as I was, and once differing in no degree from the most hardened of infidels, I have spent some hours in these solitudes, and on my bed in this house, in which the glories of another world seemed rather to be the objects of sight than of faith. And on such occasions, I was not seldom made to feel the true meaning of that apostolic declaration:—*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.* (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) Thus, though a son of earth, a creature of unclean lips, the vilest of the vile, I was permitted to enjoy such intercourse with my Maker, to experience such a sense of the divine love, and to feel so full an assurance of the covenant mercies of Jehovah, that I would not have exchanged my humble state for all the united glories of the present world; no, not even could they have been secured to me through all eternity.

“And now, my good Sir,” proceeded the venerable man, “I began indeed to discover that all nature was filled with representations and symbols of holy things, and that characters of heavenly import were graven on every creature around me; insomuch that when I had studied awhile the sacred Scriptures, and the language of types and shadows there so frequently used, my eye could scarcely meet a beautiful object below in which I did not immediately recognize the pattern of something which I trust to enjoy above. In those balmy breezes which blew over the orchards and flowery pasture-grounds in the mornings of springtide, I seemed to feel the influences of the Holy Spirit; while in the voice of the ringdove I seemed to hear its sacred whis-

perings. The beautiful light of day, as well as the shadows of the night, involved also a mystical meaning: in the one I saw the emblem of death, not of that death which acknowledges no morning, but rather of that state of quiet safety for the saints, in which the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest; while in the purple light of dawning day I beheld the renovated hopes of the just, and anticipated the glories of the first resurrection. In the course of the sun through the heavens, I saw an illustrious type of the heavenly Bridegroom; while in the waxing and waning moon I beheld that of the Church, whose splendours are ever changing with her ever varying faith. I beheld too a beautiful emblem of the Trinity in the celestial bow, as it shed its mild lustre over the dark woods, through some gently falling shower. Neither did I think myself presumptuous in thus applying it, since we are told in Holy Writ, when the father of mankind had descended from the ark after the destruction of the old world by water, that the Lord established a covenant with him, and gave him the rainbow as a token of that covenant. Comparing this passage with another in Revelations, I found in the rainbow, a type of Christ, the angel of the new covenant. So far the eye of my mind was, I thought, plainly directed by Scripture to discover in the heavenly bow a figure of the second Person in the Blessed Trinity. It next occurred to me, that it might perhaps be possible to discover in the same beautiful natural object, latent emblems of the first and third Persons. I pondered on this a long time; till somewhere reading that the rainbow is the effect of the rays of light falling in a certain direction upon the descending drops of rain, I recollected that there were passages without end in Scripture wherein the graces and influences of the Holy Spirit are compared to gentle showers and distilling dews, which water the earth and soften the parched ground, as the influences of the Spirit soften the hard heart of man: and at the same time remembering the words of St. John, *God is light*, I was satisfied that I had discovered the probable meaning of this threefold emblem, and almost wondered how it could have escaped me so long.

“Thus,” said Henry Hart, “have many of the latter days of my pilgrimage on earth been blessed; so that I

seem to have been travelling a long time through the land of Beulah. I do not however build any merit on these happy frames, though I would fain lead my fellow-pilgrims to seek happiness in the same way, seeing that there is no presumption in seeking after this divine communion, because the Lord repeatedly invites his people to partake of it, as in John, (xiv. 18, 23, 26.)—*I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.—Jesus answered and said, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.—The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* But to leave these subjects, on which I could expatiate for ever with delight—

“I lost my beloved minister nearly ten years after I first became acquainted with him. He died of some lingering disease, which many say was brought upon him by hard study. This however I never believed; but rather thought, that being ripe for glory, the Lord in mercy removed him from this present evil world to that happier state after which he had so long and so ardently aspired. I had by his advice some time before renewed my intercourse with my brother's family, in which I found pious and affectionate friends, until they removed out of this neighbourhood to a more promising situation. And thus I was again left alone in the world, as to any earthly connexions; yet not alone with respect to my God, with whom I had long been enabled to hold such communion as I have now, in my simple manner, endeavoured to describe.

“At length, the sense of my happiness became such, that I could keep it no longer to myself. This feeling seemed quite to overcome my natural disposition, which was that of great reserve. I looked about for some to whom I might impart my joy, but was several times checked by persons who appeared unable to comprehend the nature of it, and who treated me as one that from leading a solitary life had acquired certain wild and romantic notions which amounted to little less than absolute derangement. Finding that such was in general the opinion of my neighbours respecting me, I with-

drew again into my former retirement, in which I continued to live till the Sunday-school opened to me an unexpected way of publicly evidencing my love for Him, whose presence had so long formed my secret happiness.

“About the same time,” continued the old man, “finding myself getting infirm, I took a good old woman into my family, who has proved to me a quiet and inoffensive help-meet, though I never could by any means succeed in opening her eyes upon the subject of religion; for while she quietly assents to all I say, she remains, as far as I can perceive, in a state of spiritual ignorance. This was a source of peculiar trouble to me for a long season: but I have now committed her to the Lord, trusting that he will carry on his own blessed work upon her without my interference.

“And now, good Sir, I am come to the end of my history, having shewn you all that the Lord has done for me: the mighty sum of which I have not power to calculate, neither shall I through all eternity be able justly to conceive the height, the breadth, and depth, of that redeeming love, from which I derive my richest consolations.”

Here the lady of the manor having finished the history of Henry Hart, called her young people to prayer; after which they withdrew for the evening.

A Prayer for a lively Communion with God.

“O ALMIGHTY FATHER, who in thine infinite mercy hast permitted thy redeemed ones to hold communion with thee in prayer, in meditation, and by a participation of all those blessings which thou hast promised to those that are in covenant with thee, pour down upon us, we beseech thee, those inestimable gifts of thy Holy Spirit, by which alone we can be enabled rightly to appreciate this glorious privilege, as well as to receive benefit and consolation from all our approaches to thy throne, and our contemplation of divine things. O Almighty Father, we are assured that thy saints have found such delight in these exercises as no earthly enjoyment is capable of imparting: nevertheless,

we feel a backwardness to all communion with thee, which we cannot too deeply lament, nor too humbly acknowledge; since we feel a painful conviction that this reluctance arises from the depravity of our nature, and from that evil heart of unbelief in us which is ever prone to wander from God. We have hitherto considered prayer as a task, and almost every written work of man has been more acceptable to us than thy holy word, even after being convinced that no real happiness is reasonably to be expected but that which proceeds from a heart truly devoted to thee. We gladly admit any excuse by which we may absent ourselves from thy service; our thoughts are far from thee; we even associate gloomy ideas with the worship of the Creator of heaven and earth; and seek to divert ourselves with any trifle, rather than be occupied with the wonders of redeeming love. In what a total state of estrangement from thee have we hitherto lived! How alive are we to our worldly concerns! how dead and lifeless in all spiritual occupations! Though thou art ever near to us, we are generally far from thee. Our hearts are hard, our affections cold; and thus does our disinclination to divine things form a wall of separation between thee and us, even after we have had some experience of thy regenerating power and sanctifying grace. We beseech thee, O heavenly Father, have mercy upon us; cast us not away from thy presence; leave us not to ourselves, and to the power of our sins; but compel us to come unto thee, and rather deprive us of all earthly consolations than permit us to rest exclusively in them: for what should we be profited, were we to gain the whole world, and be separated for ever from thee? Whom have we in heaven, O our God, but thee? and there is none upon earth we should desire in comparison of thee. All that is excellent in thy saints, is but the faint and polluted image of thy glory. And all that is beautiful on earth, presents us with nothing more than an imperfect emblem of what thou hast prepared for thy redeemed ones in the world to come. Instruct us to look through all temporal things to those which are eternal. The heavens declare thy glory, O Lord, and the earth is full of the works of thy hand! Permit them not to exist in vain with regard to us: but enable us to discern in all these surrounding objects the

evidence of things not seen ; that, with the patriarchs and prophets of old, we may live by faith in the promises of God, and finally be numbered with those who through the exercise of that mighty grace subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions ; and of whom the world was not worthy. And now, O blessed Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, though creatures of unclean lips, we earnestly supplicate thy mercy, in humble assurance that thou wilt hearken to our imperfect prayers, for the sake of him who condescended to visit us in our low estate, that he might raise us from the ruins of our fall, and finally present us before the throne of his grace without spot or blemish, being clothed with his own righteousness, and washed from our sin in his own blood, and thus rendered meet for that perfect communion with himself which will form the highest enjoyment of the saints through a blissful eternity."

CHAPTER XIII.

Q. *You said that your Godfathers and Godmothers did promise for you, that you should keep God's Commandments. Tell me how many there be?*

A. *Ten.*

Q. *Which be they?*

A. *The same which God spake in the twentieth Chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt, out of the House of Bondage.*

First Commandment.—Thou shalt have none other Gods but me.

ON the usual day of the week appointed for the assembling of the young people at the manor-house, the lady of the manor received them all in her wonted graceful and affectionate manner; neither were they sorry to observe a small manuscript lying upon her work-table, from which they promised themselves the pleasure of hearing some interesting and profitable narrative. However, the lady commenced the business of the evening without any reference to this manuscript, by putting several questions from the Church Catechism to Miss Sophia. The questions and answers were to this effect.—

“Q. You said that your Godfathers and Godmothers did promise for you, that you should keep God's commandments. Tell me how many there be?”

“A. Ten.”

“Q. Which be they?”

“A. The same which God spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

“It cannot be necessary, my dear young people, to remind you of the time and occasion when these commandments were delivered,” said the lady of the manor. “I will not therefore expatiate on this part of our subject, but proceed to remark what perhaps some of you may already be acquainted with—that the ten commandments comprehend not the whole communication made at that time from Mount Sinai; but that there were many other laws and ordinances given on the same occasion for the observance of the people of God. The whole of these have always been classed under two heads; viz. the moral, and the ceremonial: the former of which are of eternal obligation, having been ratified by Christ, and being in their own nature essentially good; but the latter, consisting only of types and symbols, all of which received their completion in Christ, are now passed away, even as the shadow gives place to the substance. With respect to the moral law, it has been found, by the universal experience of every individual throughout all ages, that no man has ever been able to keep it undefiled in the smallest point. Hence St. Paul says, *Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.* (Rom. iii. 20.)

“Could a man perform every article of the moral law,” continued the lady of the manor, “and were he so to do from his infancy unto his death, he would have undoubtedly such a claim on the divine justice, as to have nothing to apprehend, were the earth itself to be dissolved, and the elements to melt with fervent heat; for death could have no dominion over such a man, neither would he be subject in any degree to those pains and infirmities, which are the effects of sin in all our fallen race. But while it seems almost profane to fancy the existence of such a man, you will be surprised to hear me assert, that many persons, either through ignorance of themselves, or of the nature of the divine commandments, imagine themselves to be nearly without sin; presuming to speak and act as if eternal happiness was the merited reward of their good works. But in order, my dear young people, to convince you of the spiritual nature of the commandments, and to make you sensible of your incapacity of fulfilling the duties which they en-

join, we will consider these commandments one by one, beginning with the first."

The lady of the manor then requested one of the young people to repeat the first commandment; which being done to this effect, "Thou shalt have no other gods but me," she proceeded to make the following remarks.— "The Lord is our King, and therefore we owe him the duty of subjects. He is our Saviour, and therefore has a right to our utmost love and gratitude. His united glories and excellencies render him worthy of our adoration; but our praises and prayers must for ever fall short of his infinite perfections. In this enlightened country, my young friends, we are not tempted to that open breach of this commandment which we condemn in the heathen: nevertheless, I fear that, with respect to this commandment, we are all habitually and presumptuously guilty; and perhaps those persons who are of the household of faith, or are at least professing Christians, are more perversely blind in this respect even than the men of the world. The love of self is a species of idolatry of which I have often spoken to you. The idol self reigns in every unregenerate heart; and I wish I could say that it was dethroned and stripped of its dominion in the hearts of those of whom we might hope better things. But as I shall have much to say to you on this subject in our future discourses, I shall now only speak of that peculiar species of idolatry which seems to obtain so largely in the Christian world. I mean that excessive veneration which is shewn to ministers, preachers, writers, missionaries, and other persons whom the Almighty vouchsafes to employ in his service on earth, whereby their usefulness is frequently marred, the Saviour thrown into the background, the Spirit grieved, and the abomination of desolation set up in the holy place.

"But," continued the lady of the manor, "lest I should be tempted, perhaps, to speak too warmly upon this subject, the evil of which cannot be too strongly felt, I shall proceed to read a little narrative to you which is much to our purpose."

The lady of the manor then opened the little manuscript before mentioned, and read as follows.—

Human Praise.

Mr. James Eliot, a young man of respectable though not of high family, went out to India, about forty years ago, as a free mariner; and having, during the stay of the ship to which he was attached, formed a friendship with a young man in a merchant's counting-house in Calcutta, he remained in the country when the vessel returned to England, and soon found a situation in a mercantile house in Calcutta, where after remaining a few years, and amassing a small sum, he left that city, and entered into the indigo business, in a part of the country about two hundred miles distant from the presidency, where he was entirely separated from European society.

The indigo business is one of peculiar hazard and uncertainty; some persons obtaining by it sudden and immense fortunes, while others as speedily prove bankrupts. It pleased the Lord, however, to bless the store of Mr. Eliot, so that in a short time he acquired a very considerable property, and was actually thinking of an immediate return to England for the peaceful enjoyment of his fortune, when, during a short visit to Calcutta, he fell into the society of some of those pious men who for a few years past have devoted themselves to the promotion of the Gospel among our native subjects in India.

Mr. James Eliot, who had lived for the last ten years in the jungles, where he had not acquired a single idea on the subject of religion, and had considered the conversion of the natives as a thing entirely out of the question, beholding with amazement the exertions then making in and near Calcutta, began to entertain a more advantageous idea of that religion which could induce persons brought up in civilized society to give up numerous pleasures and comforts, and to endure many considerable privations, in order to promote the spiritual welfare of the heathen. From that time, he became an enquirer after Christ, and was presently found of him whom he had been excited to seek. His time in Calcutta was short; but as soon as his eyes were in any degree opened, so rapid was the change produced in him by the light of the Gospel, that he returned to his jungles, as it were, a new creature; and even before he

reached the end of his journey, he had resolved to give up all present thoughts of going back to England, determining thenceforward to devote all his leisure hours to the instruction of the poor natives by whom he was surrounded.

It is not my purpose in this place to enter into any particular account of the methods which he adopted for the promotion of this blessed undertaking. His plans were, probably, such as now, under various modifications, are adopted by holy men in different parts of the world for the conversion of the heathen. He established schools, and built a small place of worship, where, in default of a more duly qualified person, he read and expounded the Scripture himself in the native tongue: he provided readers to go forth into the neighbouring villages: he assisted the sick, the fatherless, the orphans, and the widows; employing every lawful means in his power to make himself acceptable to the untaught population around him. He found in this his blessed career many disappointments and some encouragements. And though he endured much fatigue, particularly from labouring in a climate so peculiarly relaxing as that of Bengal, yet he was favoured with great peace of mind, together with an entire freedom from that dejection of spirits to which he, in common with the greater part of the European inhabitants of Bengal, had formerly been very liable. It is true, that when he read the accounts of what his Christian brethren were doing in other parts of the world, especially of the great anniversaries of the Bible and Missionary Societies in England, where thronging multitudes, made up partly of the great and the noble among men, were assembled together to promote the work of their heavenly Father—he would sometimes look round from the solitary elevation where his house was situated, upon the villages with their bent roofs and bamboo porches, on the swampy plains, the topes of trees, and the vast meadows on which herds of buffaloes cropped the rank pasturage; and as he looked he would feel a momentary dejection of spirit at the thought of his entire separation from all Christian society. At these seasons he could not forbear crying out, “Had I but one friend, one Christian brother, to whom I might open my heart, to whom I might communicate

my views, and make known my perplexities, what consolations and encouragements should I then experience!" But while the Almighty saw good to deny him this consolation, he gave him one which was as infinitely superior to it, as that which is heavenly is above that which is earthly. After God had permitted him for a while to sigh for these external satisfactions, he led him to feel that the Christian who seeks comfort or encouragement from a fellow-creature, rests his support on that which may break and pierce his hand; but that he who makes the Lord the Spirit his guide, his friend, his comforter, rests on that rock which is able to support him when *all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens themselves shall be rolled together as a scroll.* (Isai. xxxiv. 4.) By meditating long and in solitude on this subject, he was, at length, made fully sensible, that for him who had the privilege of having the Lord as his friend and his guide, it was absolutely sinful to desire any other, excepting in subordination and entire subservience to the will of the Almighty. He was moreover taught, that he who seeks and desires the approbation of man for any service which he has been enabled to perform towards the promotion of the kingdom of Christ on earth, is as truly and decidedly derogating from the honour and power of the Holy Spirit, as the man who denies his being and attributes. The more he meditated on this subject, and the more he considered the special office of the Spirit in the Church of Christ, the more he became convinced of the exceeding sinfulness of desiring the praise of men; as well as of the vanity of expecting any blessing to attend his labours, while he remained in any measure under the influence of this carnal and idolatrous temper. "The days are past," he would say to himself, "in which our kings, heroes, and great men, actually set themselves up as gods to be worshipped; we can see and condemn the blasphemous conduct of Cyrus and Alexander, when they allowed their subjects to pay them divine honours; and yet I myself am occasionally lamenting my solitary situation, because it excludes me from the notice and commendation of man."

Thus he was carried on from reflection to reflection, till, by the divine help and through the study of the Scriptures, he acquired such a view of the work of man's

salvation, from first to last, and of the various parts taken in that mighty work by the three glorious Persons of the blessed Trinity, that he almost trembled with horror on perceiving the possibility, had he been associated with professing Christians, of his taking some praise to himself on account of the conversion of certain of the heathen in his little district—and so greatly did this thought affect him, that he was even, at length, brought to thank God for the retirement by which he had been preserved from receiving that incense of praise which is due only to the Almighty, but which blind and erring man is too frequently arrogating to himself.

After Mr. Eliot had been labouring for some years in his solitary situation with great faithfulness, he was visited by a gentleman who had much the same Christian views with himself. This gentleman was, of course, much pleased with all he saw and heard of Mr. Eliot's conduct; and on returning to his friends, he failed not to give a relation, though with much Christian simplicity, of the blessed work which was going on in the jungles.

This relation was by far too interesting to be slightly passed over by those who take delight in such sacred reports; and, in consequence, it soon spread from one to another, till at length it reached the mother-country, where it offered a desirable article to many of the religious periodical papers of the day. In this manner, though unknown till a long time afterwards by the individual himself, the name of James Eliot became celebrated in the religious world: and he was particularly commended for his conduct at a time when his people were visited by a very severe and dangerous fever, during which he hazarded his own life by visiting the miserable huts of the sick, and administering to them that relief, both spiritual and temporal, which their situation required.

In the mean time, this pious man, while his character became more and more known and admired in the religious world, was daily growing in grace, and especially the grace of humility, in his retired jungle: the praise and blame of the world, the commendation or condemnation of his fellow-men, no longer occupied his thoughts, but had passed away from his mind among other fancies

of his unconverted state. Through the infinite power of the Holy Spirit, he had been brought to consider the salvation of man's soul as the one only thing worthy of a moment's anxiety; and hence he was taught to esteem that as the only evil, which interfered with man's spiritual good.

It was the intention of Mr. James Eliot to have spent the remainder of his days, under the divine permission, with his little Church in the wilderness: but at the very time when he seemed to be most deeply engaged and interested in his blessed work, by one of those remarkable dispensations of Providence which we often see without being able to comprehend, he was cut off from further usefulness by a severe illness, which left him in such a state, that a voyage to his native country was thought to offer him the only remaining chance of prolonging his life.

Mr. James Eliot yielded to this appointment of Providence with Christian resignation, though not without much sorrow; while his separation from his schools and native congregation was as the tearing asunder of soul and body. He became, however, much reconciled to an immediate return to England, from being able, during a short stay in Calcutta, to make such arrangements as secured a Christian teacher for his congregation, together with proper supplies for his schools and other charitable establishments. And since he was himself in a state of high affluence, he would on no account allow the liberality of others to be solicited for such assistance as his own purse could abundantly supply.

Mr. Eliot's health was so greatly benefited during the voyage, that it would have been difficult to believe, at the end of it, that he had been in so very feeble a state at its commencement. He was, however, in the mean while convinced, notwithstanding these favourable appearances, that he must never again expose himself to that climate by which his life had been so greatly endangered. The old gentleman on this account believed it his duty to take up his abode in England, though his heart still remained with the poor heathen whom he had left behind him.

This being the case, as soon as he arrived in England he wrote to two single ladies, elderly persons, residing

in a certain town in one of the inland counties, who were nearly related to him, and whom he recollected in early life; informing them of his arrival, and requesting them to procure him neat lodgings with some respectable pious family in their neighbourhood; adding, that he wished also to board in the same family, in order that he might be delivered from the cares of providing for himself.

Before Mr. James Eliot had been enabled to get his goods passed through the East-India House, he received an answer to this letter, expressed in terms of great regard and respect, and containing a proposal from the ladies in question of providing their cousin with apartments in their own house.

It happened, that Mrs. Anne and Mrs. Esther Clinton, the ladies just mentioned, were among the number of those self-tormented persons, who, during a life of considerable duration, are always labouring to keep up an appearance somewhat above that to which their rank and the smallness of their fortunes entitle them. Thus these ladies, who were daughters of a respectable farmer, had contrived to pass their days in a state of perpetual and painful effort; and although they had succeeded in forming some few connexions somewhat above them, they had been frequently exposed to petty mortifications.

During the earlier part of their lives, the pleasures of the world had formed the sole object of their pursuit; in connexion with which they always pretended to be exact judges of all matters of form and etiquette, as well as of all that was elegant and fashionable in dress and manners: they affected also a kind of instinctive horror of any thing low and vulgar; and, by frequently talking of the dignity of their own family, they had at length actually argued themselves into the belief, that it was superior to any other in the neighbourhood which was not decidedly noble. Within a few years past, a revolution—we will not say a reformation—had been effected in the minds of these ladies, by the general prevalence of religious profession in their town and neighbourhood; and especially by what had been called the conversion of a certain great lady in the vicinity, who had been many years the oracle of the Misses Clinton, being the only daughter of a nobleman with whom they had been very long acquainted.

This lady, the Honourable Mrs. Essington, had in her younger days been a beauty, and, in consequence, an object of great attention to the other sex. When time put an end to her pretensions of this kind, she suddenly became a wit, and kept the country alive by getting up amateur plays at the mansion-house, and presiding over certain mask-balls, puppet-shows, archery-meetings, and other conceits of the same nature; all of which she had the art of making as agreeable to her friends and neighbours as things of this kind are capable of being made; the town about that period of her life being a military station, and there being, in consequence, many smart officers in the neighbourhood who were glad of such a house as Essington-Hall wherein to spend an idle hour. But when, owing to some new regulations among those who had the management of these things, the military were removed from the town, these balls and other amusements lost their zest, and the restless spirit of Mrs. Essington took another direction. She suddenly became a very high religious professor; running from one place of worship to another, frequenting religious meetings, establishing schools, patronizing missions and missionaries, and going through all the usual routine and bustle of these matters: but whether with or without a proper feeling we do not presume to decide. It was, however, the general belief of those who knew this lady best, that, although her professions were loud and noisy, and her movements rapid and unsettled, yet that there were times and occasions when she gave evidence that somewhat of a real change of heart had commenced in her, and that the good seed had taken some root, although much choked by the weeds and rubbish of this world.

But, leaving these things to one who knows them better than we can do, certain it was, that this lady's religion made much noise in the town and country; and that the two Misses Clinton, soon after Mrs. Essington was said to have renounced the world, declared that they began to see things in a new light, spoke of their past lives as of a dream of folly, lamented the wickedness of their hearts, and gave notice that they should thenceforward give up dancing, and renounce whist; and, in accordance with these professions, they were observed to take the artificial roses from their bonnets,

In the mean time, those who wished them well in a spiritual way, looked in vain for any evidence of the world having lost its real hold of their hearts. They still retained the same anxiety as before to make a handsome figure in society; and as their little fortunes had, through some unforeseen accident, suffered certain deductions, they were actually at a loss in what way to augment their small income, when their cousin's letter very opportunely arriving, afforded them a reputable excuse for letting their drawing-room and best bed-chamber. Nevertheless these two good ladies, though delighted with the prospect of getting a little money in this way, took great pains to colour the matter over to their neighbours, as if their very acceptance in society depended upon its being supposed that it was extremely inconvenient to them to give up their drawing-room to their cousin, and that they were only induced to do so out of the purest motive of Christian charity. And in order to set this matter in a more exalted point of view, it was marvellous what pains they took to state the high character which Mr. James Eliot held in the missionary world; the great benefits he had rendered to the Church in India; his exalted piety; his exemplary labours; his severe sufferings; his extraordinary disinterestedness; together with the sacrifice he had made of health, of life, of property;—all these afforded them frequent subjects of discussion: and, to crown all, they took care to have the before-mentioned publication, relating to Mr. Eliot's exertions in India, always lying open on their parlour-table. By which means, and with the assistance of Mrs. Essington, whose energies were presently all excited upon the occasion, they raised such a commotion among the religious professors in the town, before Mr. James Eliot could arrive from London, that every window of the street through which he must pass might have been expected to overflow with young and old, had the hour of his arrival been exactly foreknown.

In the mean time, the good old gentleman, who was altogether, as we have before stated, a plain, unassuming man, with as little pretensions as possibly could be to any thing in the heroic line or out of the common way, was travelling down from town in the inside of a heavy coach, dressed in a neat suit of blue cloth, with

linen as white and delicate as an Indian *dobee** could make it; his mind all the while being occupied with certain schemes of usefulness, which he hoped, advanced as he was in years and unacquainted with English customs, he might be able to put in practice as soon as he found himself settled.

It was four in the afternoon when Mr. Eliot arriving at his cousin's house, was ushered into a back parlour, where the ladies were waiting dinner for him, having dressed themselves with a care and attention to fashion which not a little surprised him in persons of their age, and especially in persons so devoted to religion as certain passages in their answer to his letter represented them to be.

Nevertheless, though their appearance was not altogether answerable to his expectations, yet they received him with such cordiality, that he presently forgot the inauspicious circumstances which had struck him at his first entrance. So sitting down to partake of their dinner, they soon began to talk of days that were past, and persons who were now no more; from which subjects the old friends proceeded to speak of the present inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood, and more especially how they stood affected with respect to religion: when the old ladies failed not to give such a report as filled Mr. Eliot's mind with unfeigned pleasure; though indeed a question would occasionally arise even in the midst of their conversation somewhat tending to trouble this joy, which question was this—Do these good ladies, my cousins, know what they are talking of?

After dinner, the Misses Clinton proposed to introduce Mr. Eliot to his apartments above stairs, which consisted of a handsome drawing-room to the street, a large bed-chamber commanding a pleasant view towards the fields, and a light closet.

Mr. Eliot was ushered into these apartments with considerable parade on the part of the ladies, and more than once informed, that as the Misses Clinton saw much and very genteel company, no consideration should have induced them to give up their apartments

* A washerwoman.

but the great respect and affection which they felt for their cousin.

When this speech had been several times repeated under various forms and different modifications, it excited so much apprehension in the mind of Mr. Eliot, lest he should really be putting the old ladies to great inconvenience by taking up his dwelling under their roof, as to draw from him a reply of this sort, that nothing would distress him more than to become troublesome to his kind friends and cousins, and that he hoped they would not think of detaining him in their house longer than would be necessary for the purpose of providing himself with other apartments.

There was nothing further from the minds of the good ladies than to procure other lodgings for their cousin: but these respectable personages were of the number of those who always fetch an ample compass in order to reach home, although the most direct approach would be at once the most convenient and safe. Such persons do very well with those who move in the same indirect paths as themselves; but are often strangely disconcerted and put out of their way when they meet with plain straight-forward people, who give simple credence to all the statements of their friends. Such was the case of the Misses Clinton on the present occasion; and they found themselves put to their shifts and contrivances in order to place things on the same good footing with their cousin which they had occupied a few minutes before. In consequence of this, they were obliged to make a considerable expenditure of compliments and professions; all of which Mr. Eliot seemed as little able to comprehend as the disqualifying and disparaging sentences he had just before heard. He looked at his cousins with an enquiring eye, in answer to their polite speeches, and said, "Well, ladies, I am at your command; you will do with me as you please: and I hope it will not be found difficult to satisfy me with respect to any lodgings you may think fit to propose."

In reply to this, the old gentleman was overwhelmed with a torrent of professions and assurances, from which, after a while, he was enabled to gather this simple fact, that the good ladies wished him thenceforward to consider their house as his home—and in consequence,

being now left alone by the ladies, he began to form arrangements in his own mind for his books, his papers, &c. &c.

Thus every thing being again smooth and settled, the ladies in a short time called Mr. Eliot to tea in their parlour, having set him an arm-chair between the tea-table and the window; an exceedingly agreeable situation in the summer, inasmuch as the window opened on a garden, which was always kept neatly dressed, and filled with a variety of sweet and beautiful flowers. Before the chair was placed a little stand, on which, beside the tea-cup, lay a new pamphlet.

When the old gentleman entered the parlour, the seat intended for him was pointed out by the ladies, with a significant glance at the pamphlet, which did not at first draw the eye of Mr. Eliot, whose attention was attracted by the charms of the flower-garden, the serene sky, and the air of comfort shed around.

After some discourse on unimportant subjects, the elder Miss Clinton, drawing herself up, and looking smilingly at her sister, said, "Cousin, you do not look at the book which lies before you."

"The book!" said the old gentleman; "what book do you mean, cousin? I have been regaling myself with a beautiful page of the book of nature to which I have just turned, and which cannot but have peculiar charms for one who has been for the last five months confined in the small cabin of an East-Indiaman; and indeed I scarcely know in what other book I may find a page which is likely to contain things more agreeable to me."

Another significant look passed between the sisters; when Miss Esther took up the pamphlet, which was a religious periodical publication, and presented it to him, pointing with her finger to a certain section, and then, as she delivered the book into his hand, drawing herself up with a certain peculiar shake of the head and pursing of the mouth: all of which appeared totally unintelligible to the good old gentleman.

In order, however, to obtain some clue to this mystery, Mr. Eliot turned to the open pamphlet, when to his great amazement he discovered that it contained a full, but what to him appeared a somewhat exaggerated account of all his labours in India. His name and place

of abode were given in full length, and the whole statement was mingled with such extravagant praises of himself, his perseverance, his self-denial, his devotedness, his courage, and his piety, that being filled with shame and astonishment, blushing deeply, and laying down the book, he looked at one and the other of his cousins with an expression of wonder, which formed a curious contrast with the high self-satisfaction depicted in their countenances.

A silence of a few moments ensued, which was at length broken by Miss Esther Clinton, who said, "Well, cousin! well, Mr. Eliot! what do you think of the passage to which we wished to draw your attention?"

"Think!" said he, repeating her words, and turning over the pamphlet to look at its title; "think!—I do not know what to think."

"You are pleased, surely!" said Miss Clinton, not well knowing how to read his countenance.

"I should be pleased if all this was true," said Mr. Eliot, with an effort to appear less vexed than he really was.

"Why, surely you will not attempt to say that it is false!" returned the lady.

"Such praise as this," replied he gravely, "can be due to no man; much less is it due to me."

"What, Sir! will you say that you have not done the things stated in that book?" said Miss Esther.

"I will not say," returned Mr. Eliot, "that the bare facts in this statement are false, but I must assert, that the colouring given to them is extravagantly heightened; and those who speak of my perseverance, self-denial, courage, devotedness, and piety, are little aware how small a quantity of each of these was necessary for effecting those changes which I have been employed in bringing about. If praises like these," continued the old gentleman, "could ever with any propriety be bestowed upon any man, they are surely not applicable to persons who give of their abundance, not of their poverty, to those who want—nor yet to those who endeavour to honour their God by engaging in the labours of a missionary, not amid privations, and under fiery persecutions, but in the enjoyment of all the usual comforts and many of the luxuries of life. Let us read the list of St.

Paul's trials," added the old gentleman, taking out his Pocket-Bible, "and let modern candidates for the praise of martyrdom blush and be silent.—*In perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches.* (2 Cor. xi. 26—28.) But, to come nearer to modern days," continued Mr. Eliot, "let us consider the privations and afflictions of the holy Brainerd in the wilds of Delaware. And let the extraordinary labours and sufferings of those be had in everlasting remembrance, *who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: and others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented: (of whom the world was not worthy.)*" (Heb. xi. 33—38.)

"Well, well," said Miss Clinton, looking complacently, "we know that the saints of the Lord ought always to think meanly of themselves; and no doubt the excellent man you spoke of in the wilds of Delaware had no better opinion of himself, or of his labours, than you have, cousin James."

Mr. Eliot fidgeted in his seat; and had he not been restrained by Christian courtesy, he might perhaps have used some such expression as "Pish." But the language of contempt is not found in the vocabulary of a Christian. His expression of contempt being therefore choked in the utterance, he heaved an audible sigh, and said, "My good cousins, permit me, I pray you, to speak my mind once for all upon these subjects; and in

order to speak on these matters with greater freedom, I will not allow myself to touch on the point, whether, compared with other men, I am worthy or otherwise. I will suppose that I have all the missionary merits of David Brainerd, of Swartz, of Vanderkemp, of any or of all the excellent of the earth united; this, for the sake of argument, I will grant: and yet I do assure you, that I will neither receive such praise, nor suffer myself to be spoken of in such terms of commendation as are found in this book.

“Praise may sometimes be considered as right and proper, and at other times it may be looked upon as even blasphemous, according to the application which is made of it. We cannot indeed wonder that the men of this world should compliment and praise each other; that they should agree to set up idols chosen from among themselves; and that they should, like the ancient heathen, *serve their adopted gods upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree*: (Deut. xii. 2.) but from those who profess to be followers of the Lamb, from those who know that every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights—I must confess that from men of such a description, I look for better things; and I certainly do greatly wonder, when I hear persons, who, I trust, are converted, bestowing upon one another that praise and honour which are due unto the Lord only.

“When we consider the scheme of man’s salvation, taking it from beginning to end, we may well ask ourselves, what power has man to promote so mighty an undertaking? and what need has the Lord of his assistance in it? And though the great God may sometimes condescend to employ a human agent in this work, yet is it not evident that such condescension is a favour done to the individual so employed? and does it not follow, that if such individual takes the glory of so great a work to himself, he is in some sense guilty of blasphemously arrogating to himself the honour that belongs to God alone?

“It appears, both from reason and from Scripture, that before the creation of man, the Lord Jehovah foresaw that he would speedily fall, and, losing his original innocence, would render himself fit only for everlasting

destruction from the presence of his Creator. Wherefore this was to be, we cannot say : nor are we able to reason satisfactorily upon the matter ; not only because we probably have not faculties sufficient for grasping such a subject, but because we want the necessary knowledge of facts and circumstances. In order to comprehend these matters, it is perhaps necessary to know the history of the origin of evil—to know the history of millions of worlds, and the events which have taken place through the endless reach of all past eternity. It is to me almost evident, that the history of man is but a single link connected with one vast chain of events, too vast perhaps for the grasp of the intellectual faculties of any created being. Leaving therefore these deep things out of the question, let us simply consider that which we are permitted to know. Before God made man, as I have just now intimated, he knew that he would render himself fit for everlasting death : for the progress of man from his birth to hell is as sure and certain, without the divine interference, as that sparks fly upwards, and that water flows downwards. Foreseeing this, the Lord determined, before the foundation of the world, to rescue such as should be saved of the human race from everlasting destruction, rendering them monuments of mercy and divine love through all eternity, and to the whole universe. Whether these his redeemed ones are to be few or many, is not our present question ; though we have reason to believe from Scripture, that they will be a multitude equal to the stars of the heaven and the sands of the sea. Those therefore which shall be saved, will owe their salvation neither to their own good works, nor to the ministry of any spiritual teacher, but to God only. Nevertheless, agreeable to the tendency of our seventeenth Article—being called according to God's purpose by his Spirit, they through grace will obey the call ; being justified freely, they will be made the sons of God by adoption : and having walked religiously in good works, they will at length attain to everlasting felicity.

“ This then being the state of the case,” proceeded Mr. Eliot, “ and man's conversion and sanctification being so wholly the work of God, it appears to me, that, when persons filling the offices of missionaries, spiritual

teachers, or ministers of any kind whatever, presume to take any glory to themselves on account of the spiritual good produced in their respective spheres of labour, they are actually guilty of blasphemy; and, if they are aware of what they are doing, perhaps blasphemy of the most dreadful kind: while they who administer this undue praise to their teachers and spiritual pastors, are encouraging in themselves and others a carnal spirit, which will bring leanness and destruction into the Christian Church.

“As religion becomes more reputable and fashionable, it is to be feared that the temptation to set up religious teachers as idols will become greater and more universal; and if it does so, depend upon it the progress of the Gospel will be stayed in all those places where such a mode of conduct is adopted. Schisms will also break out in the Church; for these idolized men becoming more jealous of their own reputation than of the honour of the Lord, the influences of the Holy Spirit will undoubtedly be withheld: for the Lord will not be robbed of his honour, and he will make those who set themselves up as idols to know their own weakness and insufficiency, according to that which is written—*He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.*” (John xii. 25, 26.)

Mr. Eliot had been carried on by the warmth and energy of his feelings to say thus much before he paused to consider whether the sentiments he was uttering were likely to be perfectly comprehensible to his two auditors. He was however soon made to understand by the looks which the sisters interchanged with each other, and by the answers which they made to his remarks when he ceased to speak, that he might have spared much of the pains he had taken to explain his sentiments to them. “Well, cousin, well, cousin,” said Miss Clinton, as soon as the pause in his discourse allowed her to put in a word, “we will henceforth spare your modesty; you shall hear no more from us of the high opinion which the world entertains of your missionary exertions. Assuredly, humility is exceedingly becoming in a Christian:

it gives a beautiful finish to a fine character, and resembles the shade in the background of a glowing portrait.—You shall hear no more of this from us.” And so saying, she took up the book, and consigned it, with much seeming respect, to a place in her work-bag.

Mr. Eliot followed the book with his eye till it was concealed from his sight; and then, agreeable to a train of thoughts which was passing through his mind, he asked his cousin if the publication in question was in wide circulation?

“No publication of the kind has so universal a sale,” answered the lady with much self-complacency.

The old gentleman sighed; and, recollecting that his old Calcutta friend now resided in Scotland, it occurred to him, that, if he went to live near him, he should be out of the reach of the celebrity which threatened to annoy him. In consequence of this sudden thought, he said, “Is this publication disseminated in Scotland?”

“Yes, in Scotland and Ireland too,” said Miss Clinton with apparent glee: “and Mrs. Essington, when she was on the Continent last summer, had the agreeable surprise of seeing it on the table of a gentleman in Paris, a person who knew you in India.”

The old gentleman, on hearing this, scarcely seemed to know whether to laugh or cry at the unexpected distress which was come upon him. To find himself suddenly held forth as a Christian hero in England, Scotland, Ireland, and even on the Continent, at first irritated him, and then excited a feeling of painful mirth, to which he gave way by a sudden fit of laughter: when thinking it best to put the matter off slightly, since he feared seriousness would not serve him, at least with his cousins, he said, “Well, well, I will endeavour to bear my honours meekly; and, at any rate, I have this comfort—since the world is pleased with such petty wonders, I need not fear but others will speedily arise to draw its attention from me.”

Thus ended the conversation: and before any other subject could be started, Mr. Eliot endeavoured to overcome the irritation which had been excited in his mind by the undue celebrity bestowed on him, and was even made to feel that the matter was not of the importance which he had at first supposed it to be. “For what,”

said he to himself, "what am I, or what is my father's house, that I should imagine that the attention of the professing world should be fixed for any time on me? The first man who comes among them with the smallest pretensions to any thing out of the common way, will assuredly put me and all my concerns out of their head."

Before supper Mr. Eliot proposed family prayers; and as he with one voice was requested to perform the part of chaplain, he made a point of endeavouring to discharge the duty of that office with seriousness and faithfulness.

It must here be mentioned, that a subject of considerable importance in the eyes of the two Misses Clinton, which had occupied a great part of their private thoughts ever since the arrival of Mr. James Eliot, supplied matter for a long discussion as soon as these ladies had withdrawn to their apartment. This was no other than the waistcoat of the old gentleman, which happened to be of blue cloth, of the same colour and texture with the rest of his dress; a circumstance which the elder Miss Clinton declared to be utterly and entirely improper, contrary to all the rules of fashion and decorum, and a thing which must not on any account be overlooked.

There are certain persons whose minds are utterly devoid of that which among artists is termed *keeping*. In the minds of these persons, every object, however minute and unimportant, is put in the same forcible point of view with those of the first consequence. With these persons, there is no perspective, no softening down of lesser matters; but their feelings and affections are as vehemently excited by the colour of a riband, or the shape of a hat, as by the death of a parent or the salvation of a soul. The minds of the two ladies in question were of the order here alluded to, as will appear from the perusal of the following dialogue.—

"A complete blue suit of clothes!" said the elder Miss Clinton; "how could the good old gentleman, with such a handsome fortune too as we know him to possess, how could he think of such a thing?"

"A black silk handkerchief," said Miss Esther, "is only wanting, to make a complete sailor of him."

"The day after to-morrow is Sunday," said Miss Clinton; "surely he will not think of going to church

in that waistcoat: the eyes of all the congregation will of course be upon him. I shall be ashamed to sit in the pew with him."

"But you will surely tell him of it, sister," said Miss Esther; "it would be unfriendly not to do so: and there will be quite time sufficient to-morrow to have another waistcoat made."

"Sister," said Miss Clinton, "we don't know his temper; perhaps he may be offended."

"His linen, to be sure, is fine and good," said Miss Esther, "and delicately washed; and he would look very well in a proper suit of clothes: we must bring this matter about, if possible, before he is seen abroad."

This important discussion was concluded by a somewhat warm altercation between the two sisters, respecting which of them should give the hint relative to the unfortunate waistcoat; which was at length happily settled according to the following arrangement: Miss Clinton was to open the subject by speaking of dress in general, and the duty incumbent upon Christians of conforming to the world in non-essentials, for the purpose of avoiding offence; after which Miss Esther was to follow up the matter at her discretion.

Now all this prelude and preparation undoubtedly made the affair more difficult and awkward: but the two good ladies were not aware of this, and would have been shocked at the idea of going straight forward to the point, and saying, "Good cousin James, do provide yourself with a waistcoat of another colour, the one you have not being of a kind that is customary among us." This would have been giving just as much importance to the matter as the thing deserved; that is, if it deserved any attention at all.

This difficult point being settled, the ladies went to sleep; but in the morning they awoke nervous and trembling from a sense of the difficulty they had before them.

At breakfast, Mr. James Eliot appeared in his blue suit, utterly unconscious of the extremely unfashionable appearance which he made; and after performing his part as chaplain with his usual seriousness, he sat down to breakfast with the ladies.

As soon as the tea was poured out, Miss Clinton began

her manœuvres, and worked round so successfully, as to arrive at the point of discussion before the second dish of tea was handed round: and having finished her part by speaking of the duty of Christians to conform to the world in all unimportant points, Miss Esther was commencing her part of the drama, when Mr. Eliot, though still unconscious of any attack upon himself, took up the subject, though with his usual gentleness, and pointed out the great danger of dwelling upon a sentiment of this kind, especially as it was difficult to say what were and what were not essentials; intimating, at the same time, that Christians in general seemed to carry their conformity to the world abundantly too far.

This remark threw the sisters a little out. Considering, however, that the point they had in view was of much too great importance to allow them to be easily diverted from it, they at length, with much circumlocution, and considerable fear and trembling, succeeded in making the old gentleman understand that the world would not approve the colour of his waistcoat.

As soon as this hint was given, Mr. Eliot took in at once the whole purport of the morning's conversation, and told them that, if they would take the trouble of sending for a tailor, he would not only have a new waistcoat, but a new suit of clothes, if they pleased. "But," added he, with a smile which concealed some painful feelings, "if I am so much admired by the world as you would yesterday have made me believe, what am I to think of that world, if it is ready even to quarrel with its idol about a matter of so little consequence as the colour of a waistcoat?"

The ladies were silent: upon which, the old gentleman, rising to go to his apartments for the purpose of completing the arrangement of his books and papers, said to himself, "O my country! my country! how little Christian simplicity do I see in thee! Thy ways, notwithstanding the temperature of thy pale azure skies, make me almost long to be in my choppered bungalow again, and among my native converts, where I might hear the moaning of the ringdoves in the high bamboo woods, mingling with the simple hymns of praise adapted to the ancient melodies of the Hindoos."

Occupied with these thoughts, a tear started in the

eyes of the old man as he shut himself up in his apartment: but in the solitude of his chamber this simple Christian soon found comfort from many sweet promises of Scripture, and was speedily favoured in his own mind with the most satisfactory evidence, that the Lord bestows perfect peace on those who love and honour him, in whatever situation or circumstances they may be found on earth. The old gentleman was very busy during this day in arranging his little matters; and the next day being Sunday, he accompanied his cousins to the place of worship, where he enjoyed the ministry of a truly pious and devoted servant of the Lord. The intervals between divine service were spent by him in prayer, reading, and meditation; and he concluded the day by conducting the family devotions: so that upon the whole he was carried through the Sabbath with a considerable degree of comfort.

The next morning, an intimation was given him, not without much circumlocution, that as he had made his appearance at church the day before, he might expect several visitors during the course of the morning. These two things being put together, rather puzzled the old gentleman, who had entirely forgotten the English custom in this respect. However, he made no enquiries; but told the ladies that he was always ready to see any friend who might choose to honour him with their company. Accordingly, towards one o'clock, the ladies sent up their servant to see if the drawing-room was in exact order; and about a quarter of an hour afterwards, the younger Miss Clinton came up, ushering in the minister with whose discourses Mr. Eliot had been so greatly pleased the day before, together with a young gentleman of about twenty-one, by name George Phillips, a youth of extremely sweet and prepossessing manners, and one who was at this time under the tuition of Mr. Sandford, the minister above mentioned. With these gentlemen Mr. Eliot enjoyed an hour's truly pious and agreeable intercourse, and was led by them to some interesting conversation respecting the state of religion in India. But during this conversation, not one word of undue flattery or praise of Mr. Eliot fell from the mouth of either of these Christian gentlemen, though their manner towards the excellent Mr. Eliot, it must be

acknowledged, was that of the most profound and sincere respect.

While the gentlemen were thus delightfully engaged, eagerly discoursing on what the Lord was doing for his poor people abroad, several shrill voices were heard upon the stairs, among which one was distinctly marked exclaiming, "And where is he? I am all agitation. Where is this dear old gentleman?" A moment after which, Mrs. Essington entered with an air all impatience, and without ceremony rushed forward with her hand extended to Mr. Eliot, at the same time pouring forth such a profusion of compliments, that the astonished old gentleman evidently drew back confounded, though he failed not to bow with his usually respectful and modest air. "Is there no one here," said Mrs. Essington, "to perform the ceremony of introduction? Miss Clinton, Miss Esther, how you forget yourselves," she added, turning to the ladies, "I am very angry at your slowness. You have compelled me, all impatient as I was, to shock this gentleman by my over forwardness in introducing myself. Come, come; since none of you will speak for me, I am under the necessity of introducing myself. My name is Essington; and for the two years last past, I have been dying, absolutely dying, to see Mr. Eliot. I should have been here on Saturday or Sunday, but these hard-hearted ladies would not suffer it; and now I am come, they leave me to say all for myself.

"Well but now," added she, sitting down, "now we are met, you must tell me, Mr. Eliot, indeed you must tell me, how you left all those dear good creatures in India, all the good people in the jungles! Ay, jungle; that is the word. O that delightful account in the magazine! Dear Mr. Eliot, do tell us all about it: how could you part with them? how could they part with you? Well, but it is a perpetual feast for you to think how you have laboured among the heathen, and how many are and will be the better for your exertions! Ah! what a privilege! What an honour to have been employed in such a work! You have lived to some purpose, Mr. Eliot; you are a happy man. What sweet reflections will you have on your death-bed! I absolutely envy you."

During this time, the old gentleman remained perfectly silent, but eyeing, with mixed wonder and curiosity, the fair, faded, fashionable creature, who thus addressed him with such a mixture of vanity, thoughtlessness, and good intention. Such, however, was her incessant and tiresome volubility, that no opportunity offered itself of turning aside this amazing torrent of folly and flattery ; so that Mr. Eliot was compelled to sit quietly and hear it all, till the two gentlemen withdrew, and another party of visitors arrived, who added to the confusion of the good man's ideas by echoing and re-echoing all Mrs. Essington had said in his commendation, all which was only heightened and inflamed by the few disparaging sentences which he contrived to introduce as it were edgeways at certain momentary pauses.

But what astonished the old gentleman above all things, was, that these ladies interspersed their discourse with texts of Scripture, religious phrases, and allusions to the most important and awful doctrines of Christianity ; and all with a rapidity, ease, and levity, which would not have been misplaced in a ball-room or a theatre.

After what Mr. Eliot considered as a very long time, these ladies arose and took their leave. Upon which the old gentleman, taking up his hat, and making his escape by a back-door, passed down a private street, and presently found himself in the skirts of the town ; where though he was at this time surrounded only by mean houses and poor people, yet such was his dread of being again encountered by any of the fair flatterers from whom he had just made his escape, that he did not feel at ease till he perceived himself to be quite clear of every habitation of man.

He had entered upon a fine gravel road, bordered on one side with a paling, which, from its extent and the lofty trees which hung over it, conveyed the idea of its being the paling of a park belonging to some nobleman's seat ; and on the other, by a deep dingle, thickly shaded with coppice. The dash of waterfalls distinctly met the ear from the depths of this dell.

In this road, thus shaded on the right and left, no sound of the human voice or step was to be heard ; and nothing interrupted the deep silence of the place, except

the murmur of the waterfall, the rustling of leaves as they were gently agitated by the light breeze, together with the song of the thrush and blackbird far away in the woods. The quiet and solemn beauty of this scene were particularly affecting at this moment to the mind of Mr. Eliot; insomuch that he could not help repeating with particular warmth and feeling the following stanzas of that beautiful hymn of Cowper:—

“Far from the world, O Lord, I flee,
From strife and tumult far,
From scenes where Satan wages still
His most successful war.

“The calm retreat, the silent shade,
With prayer and praise agree,
And seem by thy sweet bounty made
For those who follow thee.

“There if thy Spirit touch the soul,
And grace her mean abode,
O! with what peace, and joy, and love,
She communes with her God!

“There, like the nightingale, she pours
Her solitary lays,
Nor asks a witness of her song,
Nor thirsts for human praise.”

When Mr. Eliot had pursued this road some little way, he arrived at a spot where a low stile in the hedge on the side of the dingle, and a ladder against the park-paling on the other side of the road, pointed out a pathway, probably from one village to another. He hesitated a moment between these; and then, turning to the side of the park, he mounted the ladder, and descending on the inside presently found himself beneath the shade of a grove of oak, chesnut, and beech, between whose stately shafts his eye reached many a sunny glade, in which deer and herds of black cattle were feeding in perfect repose. His feet being guided by a narrow pathway trodden in the grass, he went forward till he came to a more open part of the park, where, sitting down to rest himself on the root of an oak, which formed a convenient seat, he fell into a long and deep meditation.

There was much in the present prospect which reminded him of scenes to which he had been accustomed in India, and of one especially near his own habitation,

where a wide and spacious lawn was richly adorned with groups and clusters of forest trees, under which herds of buffaloes were frequently seen reposing at noon-day. There wanted only, to render the illusion complete, some trees resembling that beautiful and peculiar family of vegetables with which the tropical forests are ever adorned—but an obelisk, or rather shaft of stone, fixed on a pedestal, tastefully placed in a situation where two groves approached each other, near the brow of a hill, supplied in some degree to the old gentleman the absence of a favourite palm tree, which occupied a somewhat similar situation in the well-remembered oriental scene to which he compared the one now presented to his view.

Mr. Eliot remained for a while quietly contemplating the surrounding objects, and then broke out almost unconsciously, in words to the following effect: “O India! ever dear! O! scenes of tranquillity, which while I live I shall never cease to regret! O my poor people! my forsaken, neglected ones! why am I thus separated from you?” Here the old man wiped away a tear; and, yielding to his imagination, visited again, in thought, all those beloved scenes which he now never expected to behold in any other way.

At length, recollecting himself, he called his wandering fancy to order, and enquired of himself what it was which made him thus deeply to lament that he was never more to return to his former mode of life in India? “And what is it,” asked he, “which, in this highly favoured and enlightened country, frequently renders me so extremely uneasy, that I am ready to separate myself from all my connexions, and escape to some place where my name and person are equally unknown?”

The answer to this question was—“It is surely the want of Christian simplicity.”

“And what is Christian simplicity?” again enquired the venerable saint; “what but a determination to seek the Lord, and him only, and to renounce all earthly and secondary motives of action? Joshua had this Christian simplicity, when he thus addressed the people of Israel—*And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the*

flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. (Joshua xxiv. 15.) Abraham possessed this Christian simplicity, when he lifted up his hand to slay his only son upon the altar. The prophets of Israel possessed this Christian simplicity, when they rebuked the idolatrous kings and princes, and stood up alone in the face of infidel multitudes, to serve and adore the Lord Jehovah. These holy and blessed ones of the Lord had but one motive of conduct: neither have the archangels and celestial hierarchies of heaven any other. The glory of the Lord Jehovah is their supreme and only object: no other name but his enters into their sacred anthems. There is no idolatrous love of self, or exaltation of the creature, throughout the regions of eternal blessedness; but the song with which heaven resounds, and shall resound through all eternity, is, *Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever.*" (Rev. vii. 12.)

Mr. Eliot then put this further enquiry to himself: "But the region from which I now regret my absence, is not yet christianized; it is a heathen land, a very small number of whose immense multitudes are truly converted: how then happens it that I have found reason to regret my separation from the simplicity of that land?" He paused a moment, in consideration, and then mentally replied—"A real Christian in India lives among the heathen population as a race of men with whose opinions and customs he has nothing to do: their praise or dispraise is nothing to him: he has no concern with their unholy customs: he lives among them as a stranger and pilgrim on earth: he feels that he, and the few who think with him, must be wholly separated from the world: that he, and the little Church of whom he forms a part, must be *as a garden inclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.* (Sol. Song iv. 12.) But in a country where all are nominal Christians, where the profession of piety is as honourable as it is general, where the children of the world assume the garb and affect the language of God's children, there the influence of mixed motives must needs be felt, there Christian simplicity will rarely be preserved, and human idols will be set up even in the courts of the sanctuary itself. But is it not

the work of the Spirit to cleanse the sanctuary, to cast away the idols, and to purify the altar of incense?"

He then proceeded to meditate on the nature and offices of the Holy Spirit, and to consider his peculiar influences as exercised in emptying man of self, and in effecting a restoration of that Christian simplicity from which the Church departs whenever it ceases to give the glory on all occasions to God. The good old gentleman was thence led to reflect upon the circumstances of man's condition, with his utter inability either to promote his own salvation or to further that of others, in any degree beyond what the Lord appoints. He well knew that unconverted men are as dead and dry bones, upon which it is the office of the minister and teacher to call both in and out of season, commanding them to live and perform all the functions of life. But the minister can do no more for them; so that unless the divine and vivifying influences of the Spirit attend his labours, the dead will remain dead, and the dry bones will remain dry, to all eternity: Paul may plant, and Apollos may water; but it is God only who giveth the increase.

"Every minister therefore," said Mr. Eliot to himself, "and every teacher, should be content with his own reward in the good-will of his brethren; but let him not desire that praise which is due to God alone; and let him, above all things, beware of robbing the Holy Spirit of his due, in taking to himself the honour of man's conversion, which is as entirely and completely a divine work, as the first formation of man in an infant state, or the raising of the dead to life."

The old gentleman then went on to meditate upon the injury done to individuals in particular, and to the Church in general, by the inordinate praise of man, which, like the smoke of this nether world, rises and obscures even the glories of meridian day. Mr. Eliot then took out his Pocket-Bible, and marked several texts which he thought particularly to his purpose.

While turning over his Bible in search of those passages which confirmed him in his opinion of the actual blasphemy of man in challenging for himself that praise and honour which can be due only to God, his thoughts were led by the perusal of a part of the sixty-seventh Psalm to such a wonderful and delightful view of what

will be the glorious state of the earth when man shall cease from seeking the honour which cometh of man, and shall be led by the Spirit to devote his then sanctified powers to the glory of the Lord, that he remained for a considerable time silent and without motion, as one in a dream or vision.—*Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. O let the nations be glad, and sing for joy; for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.* (Psalm lxvii. 3—7.)

In this waking vision, all the blessedness of the Millennium arose before him—the external, as well as internal, glories of the kingdom of Christ. He saw with wonder and delight fresh fountains gushing forth in the barren wilderness, and, as in a second Eden, every tree which is good for food or pleasant to the sight, springing up from the earth now no longer accursed. He beheld, in imagination, the snows melting from the frozen poles, and verdant continents arising from the burning sands of the south. And whence this lovely change?—Because the people magnified the Lord; because every hill and every forest, every valley and every plain, resounded with the praises of the Lord Jehovah; and because the mountain of the Lord's house was lifted above the tops of the mountains; mankind confessing no other gods but the Lord Jehovah, and all human idols being cast unto the moles and the bats. The following verses, which he remembered to have heard in his younger days, came to his mind at this time; and he had just succeeded in recalling them all in their due order, when he was interrupted by a peasant, who came into the park to number the cattle and the deer. The verses remembered by Mr. Eliot were these—

“O days of bliss!—The lambs, behold,
Play with the wolf, or sleep devoid of fear;
With kids the leopards fill the fold,
And heifers gambol, though the lion's near.

“By babes the lion led in bands,
Disportive, licks their little hands;
Or, standing still in flowery meads,
By the patient oxen feeds:

“The suckling sees, without dismay,
The wreathling asp around him play;
And by the basilisk caress’d,
Smiles at his fire-fed eyes, and strokes his glittering crest.

“In all my holy mountain, they
Shall hurt no more; no more shall they destroy:
For injury’s heat shall die away,
And grief’s cold creeping venom yield to joy.”

Dr. Butt’s Versification of Isaiah.

The old man who approached Mr. Eliot wore the dress of a common labourer, appearing hale and hearty, having a fresh and florid complexion. He entered the park by the same path which had brought Mr. Eliot there; and as Mr. Eliot had his back towards the stranger, he was close upon the old gentleman before his approach was perceived. The old man addressed Mr. Eliot in the half-familiar, half-respectful way which old people often use; when Mr. Eliot, in returning his compliment, perceived that, however fresh the old peasant appeared, he had symptoms of some violent humour in his eyes. As Mr. Eliot had often observed symptoms of the same kind among the natives of India, and had also been instructed to afford relief on such occasions, it occurred to him that by adopting the same mode of treatment in this case, he might probably do the old man a service: and with this view he entered into discourse with him.

The old man informed him that he had the charge of the cattle in that park; that his lord was a minor; that the mansion-house had been long vacant, and was to remain so during the minority—and when Mr. Eliot hinted, that he thought he might be useful to him with respect to the complaint in his eyes, the old man thanked him cordially, and invited him to his house, which, he said, was in the dingle on the other side the road.

Mr. Eliot waited till the old man, whose name was James Trowers, had inspected the cattle; and then he accompanied him to his cottage, which was a neat abode, on the side of the glen, and beautifully situated among weeping rills and shadowy bowers.

In this cottage Mr. Eliot found the whole of the old man’s family, consisting of his wife, a daughter who was a widow, and two grandchildren. There was no appearance of the want of earthly goods in this family, but much

evidence of the absence of heavenly knowledge : on which account Mr. Eliot resolved to improve his acquaintance with this little household, for the purpose, if possible, of finding an opportunity of ministering to their further acquaintance with divine things : with this view, therefore, he consented to accept of the old woman's invitation to partake of a dish of boiled bacon and potatoes, which was then ready to be served up.

Thus began an intercourse between Mr. Eliot and these peasants which seemed agreeable to both parties ; for, upon his rising to take leave, and promising to come again as soon as he had prepared some salve and other medicines for the old man's disease in his eyes, great joy was expressed by all the inhabitants of the cottage.

When Mr. Eliot reached his lodgings, he found his cousins waiting tea for him in considerable perturbation of spirits ; neither could they be satisfied, till assured by him that they had not done any thing calculated to give him the slightest offence.

"Cousin Clinton," he answered, "and cousin Esther, if I am to remain under your roof, you must understand, that I must go out and come in as I please ; and I must have no waiting of dinner or keeping of meals for me. And one thing more I must say, that whenever you bring people into the house for the purpose of complimenting and praising me, I shall certainly take myself off : for I will not be aiding or abetting, or in any way partaking of, the heathenish custom which seems to prevail among you of setting up idols and worshipping them. I have some apprehension that you forget the commandment—'Thou shalt have none other gods but me.'"

"But, cousin, good cousin," said Miss Clinton, "if the world is impressed with an idea of your worth and extraordinary usefulness, how am I to prevent the expression of such conviction?"

"How?" said Mr. Eliot ; "why, tell them that they are in an error ; that I am one of the least in the kingdom of heaven, and altogether an unprofitable servant."

"Dear Mr. Eliot," said Miss Esther, "we cannot speak what we do not think."

"Then, for the love of Heaven, cousin Esther," said the old gentleman, somewhat peevishly, "do make haste, and endeavour to get more rational thoughts."

The elder Miss Clinton having discernment enough to see that the matter could not well be pressed any further at present, gave another turn to the conversation by asking the old gentleman if his tea was agreeable, and if he would choose another lump of sugar.

From that time, the Misses Clinton having, as they feared, run a considerable risk of offending their relation, whose generous payment they found exceedingly convenient, took more care how they forced company into his presence, or how they touched upon a point, on which they considered him if not altogether deranged, yet not entirely rational: in consequence of which, Mr. Eliot, being left more to himself, became more reconciled to his situation. He went out and came in when he chose, and employed his time to his own satisfaction. It was not long before he made himself acquainted with all the public charities in the town and neighbourhood, which he not only largely assisted, but in the management of which he took such a part as the former managers were desirous he should. He assisted the minister, for whom he began to feel a sincere friendship, in setting on foot one or two new plans for doing good; in addition to which he became exceedingly assiduous in visiting the poor from house to house, administering to their spiritual and bodily necessities. He was a constant visitor in James Trowers's family; and whenever he had a mind to enjoy the beauties of nature, and study the Book of God among the glorious works of the Creator, he would take his meals with this obscure family, never however quitting them without leaving behind him some mark of his bounty greatly above the expectations or wishes of those who had entertained him. His success in the treatment of the poor man's diseased eyes was so considerable, that the family attributed to him a much greater degree of skill in such matters than he possessed: and hence they were rendered more willing to take his judgment in matters of a different nature.

In these various employments passed Mr. Eliot's first autumn and winter in England, during which he offered many and many earnest prayers for the welfare of his little flock in India.

At length the summer arrived; and Mrs. Essington, calling one afternoon to drink tea with the Misses Clinton, brought much religious intelligence from Town,

where she had been spending the last few months. Her accounts consisted of anecdotes of various anniversaries of religious meetings which she had attended; descriptions of the preachers most in fashion; sudden and wonderful conversions, which were to be attributed to this sermon, or to that conversation, of some eminent character; accounts of remarkable natives from the South Seas, from Africa, or from Tartary; with other matters to the same purport: all of which she mixed up with so many fashionable turns of speech, and so evident a desire to exalt self, as the person who had seen, heard, and experienced more than ever had been seen, heard, or experienced before, that Mr. Eliot sat very uneasily on his chair, inwardly praying that this female, who possessed such powers of elocution, and seemed to have so much knowledge, might cease to be as the bones which shake, and rattle, and produce uncertain sounds, and become, through the power of the Spirit, a truly regenerated creature.

While Mrs. Essington was thus holding forth concerning the wonders which she herself had lately heard and seen, Mr. Sandford came in to announce to Mr. Eliot, that he expected some eminent Christian characters from London in a few days, and that he should avail himself of their presence and assistance to celebrate the anniversary of a little Missionary Society, which had been established in the town about two years, and which he described as being in so very languishing a condition, as to require all the aids which the friends of missions could give it.

Without waiting for Mr. Eliot's observations on this communication, Mrs. Essington laid her hand upon Mr. Sandford's arm: "And you are come, I know you are, Mr. Sandford," said she, "to ask Mr. Eliot's assistance on the platform? Yes, you may shake your head, Mr. Eliot," she added, laughing; "but you will not be let off. A speech we must and will have from you: it is what the whole town expects. We shall take no denial: we must hear something about that dear little flock in the wilderness, and about your poor converts, and what you did for them, and all that. It is of no use to refuse: I absolutely won't come to the meeting unless you speak. And, more than that, Mr. Sandford, I will fit up the old

theatre, and will have a *dilletante* play, or concert, or some such thing, got up for the very day, and that out of pure spite; if you don't prevail on Mr. Eliot to speak. And so now you know what you have to trust to."

"Your threat does not alarm us at all, Mrs. Essington," said Mr. Sandford, good-humouredly; "for I cannot suppose that you would be able to persuade any body to attend your play, who would be likely to visit our meeting."

"Notwithstanding which," said Mrs. Essington, "I really do think you had better not try me. I can be very spiteful when I am offended—nobody more so. But now, my good Mr. Eliot, you will not refuse me; I am sure you will not. You will let us have your speech; I am sure you will. There's a good man: he does not refuse; he does not say a word against it. Put his name down, Mr. Sandford, in your list of speakers. You have your rough copy, your *ébauche*, in your pocket; and it runs thus—'Mr. Essington in the chair.' Of all people in the world, you always put Essington in the chair, though Heaven knows why: however, so it always has been. 'Augustus Essington, Esq. &c. &c. in the chair: business commenced by the Rev. Mr. Sandford: motion proposed by Mr. Anthony Beverly; seconded by the celebrated James Eliot, Esq. from Bengal: and so on.' Then comes Mr. So and So, from London, and from New Zealand, and from no one knows where, or indeed much regards it, provided we can muster enough of talent, and peculiarity, and so forth. Well, I hope with all my heart you will have a full meeting; and if you don't make an enemy of me, I will crowd Essington House with visitors out of the four neighbouring counties, in order to fill your room with beauty and fashion."

"And pray," said Mr. Sandford, "what have beauty and fashion to do at missionary meetings?"

"I have no objection to see beauty in such places," remarked Mr. Eliot; "but we might dispense with the presence of fashion."

"O! you Goth! you Vandal!" said Mrs. Essington. "Have fashionable people no souls? Are they to be excluded from all religious meetings? Why, Mr. Eliot, you have lived in the jungles till you are become a perfect savage."

"I cannot think, Mrs. Essington," said Mr. Eliot, "that religious people ought to have any thing to do with fashion."

"An open attack upon me, I protest," said Mrs. Essington. "Miss Clinton, Miss Esther, do you sit by and allow this? O my spring fashions! What shall I do with them? Must I pack them up and send them back to town? Do decide for me, Mr. Sandford. Must a fashionable woman be a cast-away?"

"You have put a more serious question, Mrs. Essington, than you are aware of," said Mr. Sandford. "And you must permit me to answer it from Scripture—*Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.*" (Rom. xii. 2.)

Mrs. Essington sat fidgetting in her chair till Mr. Sandford had ceased speaking; after which, looking serious for a moment, she rallied her spirits, and recommenced her attack upon Mr. Eliot, insisting that he should speak at the missionary meeting.

"Mrs. Essington," said Mr. Eliot, calmly, "if my friend here thinks it an absolute duty that I should so do, I shall hope to be assisted in the performance of that duty; nevertheless, I have no hesitation in saying, that if it is not a duty I would rather be excused coming forward. And now, dear lady, after this simple explanation of my feelings and intentions, spare me, I pray you, the remainder of the evening."

"That I assuredly will," said Mrs. Essington, smiling, and adding with a sigh, "Oh, Mr. Eliot, what would I give for half your Christian simplicity!"

"Separate yourself from the world, dear lady," said Mr. Eliot, "and you will speedily find simplicity."

Here the conversation dropped; and other matters were brought forward, in which Mrs. Essington shewed herself to be fully acquainted at least with the commonly received doctrines of religion.

The day of the missionary anniversary arrived; when several respectable persons conscientiously active in the cause, and accustomed to speak, presented themselves on the occasion.

Mr. Eliot having been made to understand that it was the expectation of the friends of missions that he also

would address the assembly, he appeared on the platform though modestly drawn somewhat into the background.

The meeting was opened by the appointed persons; and several very animated and appropriate speeches were made by gentlemen who were strangers in the town. At length Mr. Eliot was called, who came forward (to the surprise of his cousins) without perturbation, a circumstance which they considered as wholly irreconcilable with the general reservedness and unpresuming nature of his character; these good ladies not knowing that the very simplicity of his character, associated with a determination to reject all praise on his own account and claim it only for his Lord and Master, was the very thing calculated to support him when called upon by duty to speak and act in public. He was above the praise of man; he did not desire it; and therefore he had none of those tremors which the fear of losing it would have excited. There may be, and undoubtedly there is in many persons, a degree of nervous sensibility, which, without charging such persons with vanity or the fear of man, would make them tremulous on a public occasion of this kind; nevertheless, all other things being equal, it scarcely, I believe, admits of a doubt, that the humblest man will always possess a larger degree of self-command, on being called to a sudden and public appearance, than the vain or conceited man, or the man to whom human praise is an object of desire. But to leave these reflections.

Mr. Eliot made a speech of considerable length, in which he gave a simple, unadorned, yet highly interesting account of the people of the country in which he had resided so many years, partly respecting their heathen and unconverted state, and partly respecting the blessed effects which the Christian religion had produced upon those few natives whose conversion he had witnessed. And it was remarkable, that, throughout this speech, he never once alluded to himself, but simply and invariably gave the honour where it was due, even to him in whose hand are the hearts of all men.

Immediately before the platform sat Mrs. Essington, with her large and fashionable party; among whom were the Misses Clinton, who took conspicuous places that day, on the strength of having a near relation on the platform: and the moment the old gentleman ceased,

they excited such a roar of applause, clapping their hands, and striking their feet against the ground, that the next person who arose, a young man, Mr. Anthony Beverly, an inhabitant of the town, was obliged to stand some minutes ready to speak, before he could obtain a hearing.

In the mean time, Mr. Eliot returning to his chair, and finding it occupied, was obliged to take a seat in a more prominent part of the platform. Whether he was distressed or pleased by the long and continued clapping, could not be discerned even by those who knew him best and watched his countenance. The real state of the case was, that he understood not the signification of the thing; so that having no acquaintance with this noisy mark of commendation, he actually failed to apply it to himself, and therefore sat wholly unconscious.

In the mean time, the noise ceasing, the young man began his harangue, which formed a remarkable contrast with all that had gone before.

He first, in a florid and elaborate, yet common-place style, complimented his country upon her missionary exertions and her indefatigable labours, her mighty works of self-denial, and the glorious pattern she exhibited before all nations. He spoke of her Bible societies, her school societies, and her missionary societies; he congratulated her on her valiant sons and her beautiful daughters, the greater part of whom, he said, were engaged in one mighty labour of love, viz. the conversion of the heathen, the spread of the Bible, and the relief of the afflicted.

He then passed some very well-turned compliments on his own town; and next he proceeded to utter a high panegyric on a certain individual, whom he did not name, but whom he described as having spent a long and laborious life devoted to missionary labours, in a voluntary banishment from his country, his home, his friends; subjecting himself to endless privations, excessive fatigue under the burning sun of a tropical climate, and exposed to every kind of indignity: and he called on his town, to receive and reward this Christian hero, with every testimony of love, of honour, and of approbation; and to hold him up as a bright and burning example for the imitation of their sons and daughters.

While the young orator was thus vehemently labouring his point, in a manner, and with an expression, to which I despair of doing justice, the Misses Clinton, as parties nearly and dearly allied to the person chiefly concerned, were hiding their blushes with their fans, while the good old gentleman himself, to the astonishment of Mrs. Essington and her party, sat perfectly unmoved, looking stedfastly at the speaker, without being in the least able to comprehend what he meant. At length, being struck with some very extraordinary expressions, of which he could make neither head nor tail, he turned to Mr. Sandford, who sat next to him, and, with a certain look of wonder which he had more than once found occasion to assume since his arrival in England, very simply asked him the name of the extraordinary person of whom the young gentleman was speaking.

Mr. Sandford smiled, and said, "Do you not know any man to whom this description answers?"

"In some points," said Mr. Eliot, "it might suit David Brainerd; but in others, no mere man can deserve such praise."

"But," said Mr. Sandford, "we must not go so far as Delaware, nor yet to so remote a period as the last century, for this man: we are told that we are to look for him in our own town, and in the present day."

"Well," said Mr. Eliot, "if only half what we hear of this man be true, we have a treasure in the town I was little aware of." So saying, the old gentleman settled himself in his chair, hemmed twice, took a pinch of snuff, and prepared himself to listen again with undisturbed curiosity.

In the mean time, the young panegyrist finished his harangue, and retired gracefully to his seat; while Mrs. Essington's party excited a second thunder of applause, which lasted long, bursting forth again and again, while every eye was fixed upon Mr. Eliot, who sat, as I before remarked, perfectly unmoved, excepting that on the clapping continuing somewhat too long, he turned to Mr. Sandford, and said, "Too much of the theatre in this business, Mr. Sandford! too much of the theatre! Are you not of this opinion, my good Sir?"

Mr. Sandford, who had some difficulty to preserve that gravity of countenance which his exposed situation and

the solemnity of the occasion demanded, having answered Mr. Eliot as shortly as politeness would permit, endeavoured to fix his attention on the person then rising to address the company, in whose speech none of those impertinences appeared which had crept into the harangue of his predecessor.

The meeting being concluded, Mr. Eliot arose, on the whole much satisfied, for much had been said to the purpose, and was walking off the platform, when Mr. Essington coming behind him, said, "Well, my old friend, how are you? We shall see you, I hope, at dinner. But don't you return your thanks to Mr. Anthony Beverly?"

The old gentleman looked for an explanation; and in the mean time several gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood were gathered round Mr. Eliot, to whom Mr. Essington appealed, saying, "Gentlemen, do you not think that some kind of acknowledgment, be it ever so trifling, is due from Mr. Eliot to young Beverly?"

One of the gentlemen replied, "I do not know what to say, Essington: it is an awkward thing for a man to thank another for speaking well of him!"

"Thank him!" said Mr. Essington; "no, I would not have him go and thank him in so many words; but if a man has the smallest address, he may fall upon something by which he may make it known that he feels the compliment paid him."

Mr. Eliot, who was becoming every moment more and more perplexed, and more and more at a loss what to make of all he heard, now interrupted the company, saying, "I am quite at a loss, gentlemen; I do not comprehend one single syllable of what you are saying!"

How long these good gentlemen might have been before they came to a right understanding on this subject I cannot pretend to decide, had not Mr. Sandford stepped in, and explained to the astonished company that he was well assured Mr. Eliot had not applied one word of Anthony Beverly's panegyric to himself.

"To myself!" said Mr. Eliot. "You amaze me: it could not be. No man could surely be so absurd as to speak in such terms of me, or indeed of any man to his face!"

Mr. Sandford, observing Mr. Eliot's anger beginning to

arise, took him immediately by the arm, and led him out into the street, where he stated to him the duty of taking evil report and good report alike with a calm and humble spirit; and he had the pleasure to find his old friend willing to be convinced, and to be regulated by him. "I was nigh to falling, and you lifted me up, brother," said Mr. Eliot. "But as this matter has ruffled me more than I could wish, not only having excited some degree of anger in my breast, but also (what might seem almost irreconcilable with such a feeling) a kind of self-consequence, or sense of my own importance—I will, if you please, my dear brother, instead of dining at the public meeting, retire for the rest of the day into solitude, in order to preserve that peace which the world has well nigh destroyed." Having then charged Mr. Sandford with his excuses, and begged him to make such apology as he thought right, if apology there needed, for the rough manner in which he had spoken of Mr. Anthony Beverly's speech, he made the best of his way to his beloved retirement.

Just as he was about to turn from the high road into the park, he met old James Trowers, who insisted on his accompanying him to his cottage to take some refreshment. He accepted the invitation, and seated himself at the door; while the old woman set before him such things as the house afforded. But his manner was so far from its usual ease and cheerfulness, that the good dame more than once asked after his health; and remarked to her daughter, after his departure, that she feared the old gentleman had heard some bad news, for his look was not half so cheerful as it used to be.

When Mr. Eliot had partaken of such refreshment as the cottage could supply, he took his leave, and walked into the park; where seeking his favourite seat at the foot of the oak, he remained a while in deep meditation: and so fully was he taken up in this meditation, that he did not perceive that the declining sun was already beginning to dip behind the western grove. At length he was startled from his deep musings by the sound of an approaching step, and, a minute afterwards, he was respectfully addressed by George Phillips, who said, that he had presumed to follow him to his favourite haunts, in order that he might have the pleasure of walking home with him.

The modest, intelligent, and courteous address of this young man was always agreeable to Mr. Eliot, and he accordingly received him with a cordiality which immediately put Mr. Phillips entirely at his ease. As the evening was remarkably fine, Mr. Eliot proposed that they should return home by a somewhat circuitous course; and as their walk was thus prolonged, they had time for a long and very serious discourse.

The conversation naturally turned upon the events of the day. Mr. Eliot remarked, that he wished these kind of meetings, which he considered as sacred assemblies, could be conducted with less reference to second causes, and with a more decided view to the glory of God.

"But surely, Sir," said Mr. George Phillips, "when a fellow-creature has done well, you would not withhold from him the commendation he deserves?"

"In every case," said Mr. Eliot, "allowing the object to be as worthy as man can be, I not only disapprove of public compliments being made in the presence of the person complimented, but even in his absence, should he be a living man; and for this reason, because the praise of a living man may prove injurious to the welfare of his soul, and is assuredly the most probable means that can be taken to impede his usefulness: for the moment the minister or teacher ceases looking up to God, and begins to be occupied by self, that instant his usefulness in a great measure ceases; and though his zeal may seem for a while to flourish, yet, having no proper root, it will gradually wither and come to nought."

Mr. George Phillips then asked Mr. Eliot if he disallowed the praise of departed saints, as in such case there was no danger of injuring the individuals by the commendations bestowed upon them.

"They who are passed into another state of being," replied Mr. Eliot, "cannot, it is true, be injured by any expressions we may use in their favour. But though we cannot injure the dead by lifting the names of departed saints to the skies, and idolizing their ashes, yet the living may certainly be injured by indiscreet praise lavished on the dead. Is not the human race all of one-family? God made of one blood all nations to dwell upon the face of the earth; and if it could be established as a fact that this race had produced even one nearly perfect or highly

excellent character during the course of the many ages during which man has inhabited the earth, this single fact would go very far towards raising the dignity of our nature; and we might then maintain with some reason that what has been before may be again. But if we judge by that which we have an opportunity of actually seeing, we perceive little of what is in the smallest degree commendable in any natural character: judging, therefore, of that which we do not know from that which we do know, I take it for granted that all those fine tales they tell us of perfect characters among the dead, are utterly false; and I look on these tales, however confirmed by historical testimonies, as exceedingly deceitful and mischievous fictions, which have led thousands and tens of thousands into error."

"But, Sir," said Mr. George Phillips, "I perceive that you are speaking of unconverted characters; and every Christian must allow, that holding up such as examples to others, is highly dangerous. Nevertheless, to let these rest, permit me again to ask you, do you disapprove of our commending the departed saints? May we not give praise and honour to such men as these?"

"By a saint, I understand," said Mr. Eliot, "a man who was chosen before the foundation of the world from the rest of his sinful brethren, by the free grace of God, and not through any of his own works or deservings, to be called, sanctified, and finally glorified."

"Certainly," said Mr. George Phillips.

"You allow this definition of the saint?" said Mr. Eliot.

"I do," said Mr. George Phillips.

"You allow, that it was not for any good work or deservings of these persons that they were chosen, but that they were selected by the free choice and according to the everlasting purpose of the Almighty?"

"I do," said Mr. Phillips; "because Scripture, and the Articles of the Church into which I am about to enter, bear me out in so thinking."

"You also believe," said Mr. Eliot, "that those who are chosen are also called, and that those who are called are also sanctified, and that those who are sanctified are also glorified—the work from beginning to end being that of the Lord Jehovah, without the smallest assistance

from any creature. And now, Mr. Phillips, if you can point out any one occasion, or any one circumstance from beginning to end of this mighty work of man's salvation, in which the saint becomes entitled to praise from his fellow-men, why then let us give it him: if not, let us do as Moses did—that is, in writing and speaking of our fellow-creatures, let us simply record their actions, and give the glory to that God by whose gracious influence they were enabled to do what was good and acceptable in his sight."

"I have no doubt that you are right, perfectly right, Mr. Eliot," said George Phillips; "and yet, I candidly confess that I cannot quite receive your doctrine."

"It is not the question we are now discussing, whether you can receive my opinion or not, my dear Sir," said Mr. Eliot; "but whether it is just and according to Scripture?"

"Certainly, Mr. Eliot, your remark is just," said George Phillips. "If your sentiments on this subject are according to Scripture, they ought to be received, be they ever so contrary to flesh and blood. But there is something in the nature of these sentiments which so entirely subverts all the received opinions and customs even of the religious world, that I must hesitate to admit them till I have looked more closely into them, and examined more precisely their ground and tendency."

"What, I ask, Mr. Eliot," continued Mr. George Phillips, "what do you suppose would be the consequence among the different orders of mankind, if it was generally considered an act of impiety for man to receive high commendation from his fellow-creatures? and if the glory of every commendable action were to be immediately carried to God as the Author of all good?"

"One effect of this change of feeling in society," said Mr. Eliot, "would, I imagine, be, that men would lose the desire of performing many of those actions which are now highly praised in the world, but which it would be blasphemy to attribute to a divine influence; that which is called ambition would immediately disappear, and false glory under every form would become instantly disreputable."

"But religion," said Mr. George Phillips, "might still be used as a cloak; and a man might be as much flattered,

by hearing it said of him, that he had been enabled to do well under such and such a trial, or in such and such circumstances, as the hero in the field of battle, by the unqualified panegyrics which are now bestowed upon him."

"And what does this prove," said Mr. Eliot, "but that we should refrain from speaking in terms of this kind concerning our Christian brethren in their hearing, knowing as we do the deceitfulness of man's heart. To a mind of any considerable refinement, gross flatteries are less dangerous than those of a more delicate kind; and nothing can in my opinion preserve a man from the danger of insinuated praise, but a strong persuasion that in admitting it, he is in some degree guilty of the sin of arrogating to himself divine honours, particularly when the subject of that praise is any thing either real or supposed in his character, which ought to be ascribed to the influence of the Holy Spirit. For what good moral quality is there in the converted soul, which is not the immediate work of the Holy Spirit? since we are taught that *the fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.*" (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

"Your ideas startle me, Mr. Eliot," said George Phillips. "I begin to look on these things in a new point of view; and I tremble almost to think to what a height of blasphemy men may go in arrogating to themselves that which is due only to God, and to that Person in the Godhead especially of whom it is written—*All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.*" (Matt. xii. 31.)

"In what this sin against the Holy Ghost consists, is not easily understood," said Mr. Eliot; "but I should be inclined to suppose it to be opposing or arrogating the authority of the Holy Spirit, not through ignorance, but in order to set up or exalt self either in opposition to, or in place of this holy person. I therefore conceive, that every Church which sets up its own ordinances and rites as possessing a divine influence capable of effecting that which alone can be produced through the agency of the Holy Spirit, must in some sense be considered as guilty of this sin against the Holy Ghost: and though I

would not condemn every member of such Church, yet I should not scruple to assert that such Church itself is *anathema maranatha*. In this point of view, the Roman Catholic Church, in my opinion, stands especially condemned, since, as a whole, it is assuredly chargeable with this great sin, inasmuch as it appropriates to itself powers which are expressly attributed to the Holy Spirit in the particular office which that divine person has undertaken in the grand concern of man's salvation.

"But," continued Mr. Eliot, "in this respect, the Church of England, speaking of it as a whole, stands clear and blameless; and if its ministers acted up to its Articles and doctrines in this great and important point, I am persuaded that it would become a bright and shining light in the world."

"Your remarks, Mr. Eliot," replied George Phillips, "appear to me to take every instant a more serious turn, and they will afford me many hours of deep meditation."

"I wish they may, my good young friend," said Mr. Eliot; "and nothing do I more earnestly desire for you than that your ministry may be altogether free from this spirit of self-seeking, and that you may go forth continually in the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness only. For *they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint.*" (Isaiah xl. 31.)

Mr. Eliot then proceeded to speak of the nature and work of the Spirit in general terms.—"There is an old saying," continued the old gentleman, "of some good man, I forget whom, to this effect—Let him who doubts the doctrine of the Trinity go to Jordan. Now at the baptism of Christ by John, the Spirit was seen descending like a dove, and lighting upon him. This is that Holy Spirit who, agreeable to his office in the economy of grace, and his character in the covenant made between God and man, accomplishes that change in the souls of the chosen of the Lord by which they become new creatures, and are rendered meet for everlasting happiness. The first act of this blessed Spirit, is to communicate a supernatural life to their souls, thus rendering them fit subjects of his divine influences. Before this life is imparted, man is described as being dead to every thing of

a spiritual nature: and it is well known, that he who is dead must needs be incapable of receiving any impression from outward things. They therefore to whom this life is not imparted, are utterly incapable of receiving the things which are of God; and though they may have the form, and semblance, and exterior deportment of converted men, thus constituting a part of the visible Church on earth, yet, having eyes they see not, and having ears they hear not, neither can they understand. It is generally acknowledged, that the work of regeneration is momentary, while the succeeding operations of the Spirit are understood to be gradual. This blessed Spirit begins his work in the souls of the elect by communicating to them a new life, which it carries on by convincing them of sin, discovering to them how the Father has been reconciled to them through the Son, and how they *are washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* (1 Cor. vi. 11.) In this manner, by the power of the Spirit, the renewed soul is prepared for the reception of Christ, being made to apprehend his love and that of the Father, and as ardently to desire communion with both as the new born babe desires the milk which is provided for him in the breast of his mother.

“Thus, as I have before said,” continued Mr. Eliot, “the work of man’s conversion and sanctification is begun, carried on, and completed by the Lord the Spirit: and though the ministry of man may be sometimes used in this work, yet is such ministry so utterly inadequate to the end intended, and its insufficiency is so frequently made to appear, that there can be no room whatever, in my opinion, for the most successful writer, teacher, or preacher, to take any credit to himself; and I have little doubt but that the influences of the Spirit are generally withheld in all cases in which the arrogance of man thus endeavours to deprive the Lord Jehovah of the honours due unto his name, and by making other gods unto himself; *for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God;* (Exodus xxxiv. 14.) neither can we expect that he will patiently endure the idolatries of man.”

By this time, the two gentlemen having arrived at the suburbs of the town, the busy hum of the place prevented all further conversation.

When Mr. Eliot entered his cousins' parlour, he found them preparing for supper; and supposing him to be just returned from the public party, they asked him how he liked his entertainment and his company, and were not a little surprised upon being informed where he had dined, and how he had spent the latter part of the day.

From that time, Mr. Eliot preserved the same simplicity of character, and the same fixed determination to reject all human praise, seeking that honour only which cometh of God. Many blamed him for this, though no one could be offended, because his reserve on this subject was by no means mixed with moroseness, nor with any offensiveness of manner; for his general deportment was that of extreme courtesy, his charities were large, and his labours for the spiritual good of the poor and ignorant regular and unremitting.

For a short time he afforded much matter of discourse in the town and neighbourhood, and his sentiments on these points were frequently discussed. Mrs. Essington talked largely and fluently about him in all companies for a season. "Dear old man!" she would say; "I do like him: he is a good creature. And I know not whether I do not like him the better because he won't receive our compliments. He is the first man, however, who ever refused to let me compliment him. I don't except you, Mr. Sandford, although you look so hard at me. I have not been so long in your neighbourhood without finding out your weak side. I know what will please you. I have had nothing to do but to mention some poor sinner converted under your ministry, and then I have been sure of your approbation."

"For shame, Mrs. Essington," said Mr. Sandford. "Where is your charity? If a minister may not rejoice over a lost sheep which is found, what, I pray, is a proper subject for joy?"

"Very true, Mr. Sandford," said the lady. "And I could add a great deal more in your favour, which you have not said for yourself, about the love of souls and paternal regard for your flock, and the tender feelings of a pastor, &c. &c.; but when I have said all I can for you, I shall think of you just as I did before; namely, that you are not so much above human praise as Mr. Eliot: for were I or any one to venture to speak to him

about any good he may have been the means of doing to any poor soul either here or abroad, what would his answer be?—"Give God the glory, good Madam." (I like to hear him say, '*Good Madam.*') "Give glory to the Lord. Do not speak of me. Remember the first commandment—"Thou shalt have no other gods but me."""

"And do I not speak to the same purpose, Mrs. Essington?" said Mr. Sandford, who appeared a little hurt by her remarks.

"O yes, yes; you say something like it. But then, in you it seems more a *façon de parler*. Somehow, you don't contrive to stop my flattering tongue as Mr. Eliot does. You don't make me feel that I dare not proceed; but, on the contrary, you rather draw me on to say more. But this saucy old man! this Bengalee! this Mr. James Eliot! he makes one feel that he thinks all we can say on these subjects is nought; that if he cannot have commendation from God and his own heart, he will have none; and having that, ours is not worth his notice. There is a grandeur and magnificence in this conduct, which raises him wonderfully in my esteem. I do like him, I own, though he has often made me hold my tongue when I have had a vast deal to say. But, Mr. Sandford, you look grave."

"I do, Madam," said the minister; "because you have touched me to the quick, and given me a view of myself which I fear is a just one. I am not hurt: but I think that I shall live to thank you for your reproof, and Mr. Eliot also for giving the occasion."

"Well, now," said Mrs. Essington, "I am not sure whether I don't like you as well for receiving my saucy reproofs (which by the bye were not intended) with so much candour, as I do Mr. Eliot for rejecting all my compliments."

"Beware how you compliment me now, Mrs. Essington," said Mr. Sandford. "You have made me jealous of myself on these points, and I trust, with the divine blessing, to keep a stricter guard on this my weak side in future."

In the mean time, while the opinions of the town were divided respecting the peculiarities observable in Mr. Eliot's character, and the Misses Clinton secretly regretted those extraordinary sentiments which they said pre-

vented their cousin from becoming an eminent Christian character, and a shining light in the country, the Almighty decided the point, and proved to those who were inclined to see, that this his chosen one had done well in rejecting human praise, and pursuing with simplicity that course of life, in which he was best able to preserve the calmness of his mind and that state of heart in which a man would wish to be found at the approach of death.

At the beginning of the second winter of his residence in England, he was seized by an inflammatory complaint on the lungs, which terminated his life in a few days. He died in the arms of George Phillips, while Mr. Sandford was offering a prayer by his bed-side. "My father! my father!" said Mr. Sandford, as he closed the eyes of the departed saint; "my father! my father! O that a part of thy humble and holy spirit may rest upon me, and that henceforward I may be raised as high above the desire of human praise as thou wert." George Phillips earnestly united in this prayer on his own behalf.

The large property which had belonged to this gentleman, was appropriated, by a will made soon after his arrival in England, to the use of his flock in India, and the poor of the town and neighbourhood where he then resided; Mr. Sandford and Mr. George Phillips being appointed as trustees; with the reserve of such a sum for the use of the Misses Clinton, as rather more than compensated for the loss of that liberal allowance which he was accustomed to make for his lodging and boarding. It was supposed that he would have left them more, had he not been fearful of ministering thereby to that worldly spirit which he had so often combated in these his only remaining relations. James Trowers was the only poor person belonging to the neighbourhood mentioned by name in Mr. Eliot's will.

Mr. James Eliot is remembered with the tenderest affection to this day in the town in which he died; and the two ministers who were present at his death have given evidence that the pious conversation of this godly man, and the sweet simplicity of his spirit, were rendered peculiarly beneficial to them, the Holy Spirit having vouchsafed to make use of this Christian stranger for their improvement in grace, and especially for their more

conscientious adherence to the commandment—"Thou shalt have no other gods but me."

The lady of the manor having finished this story, and finding that the allotted interval for these evening exercises had expired, called the young people to prayer; after which, they all returned to their respective homes, meditating and conversing by the way on that which they had heard.

A Prayer to be enabled to keep the First Commandment.

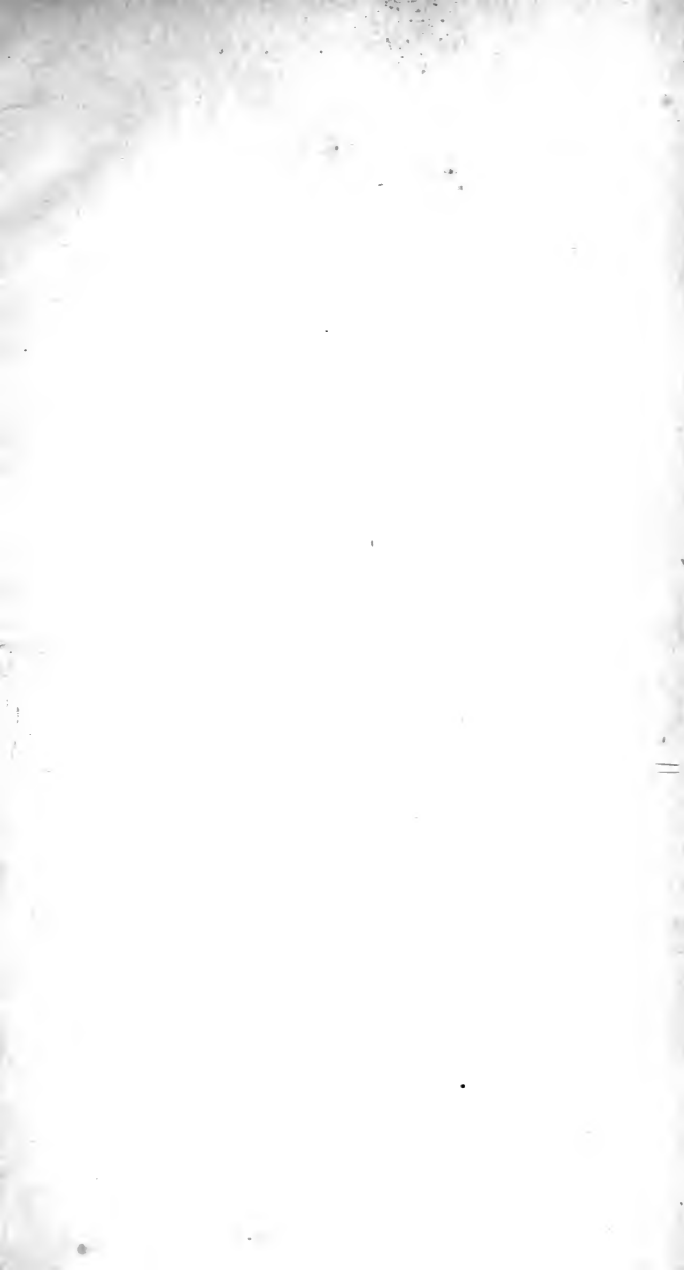
"O ALMIGHTY and BLESSED LORD GOD, who art the only Creator and Ruler of all things, and in whom we live, and move, and have our being, we beseech thee to give us such a view of the spiritual nature of the commandment, 'Thou shalt have no other gods but me,' that we may tremble at the idea of departing in the smallest degree from this holy rule, either by making gods of our fellow-creatures, or seeking that praise and honour for ourselves which are due only unto thee. Thou hast spoken of thyself, O Lord, as being jealous for thy holy name; and we know that thou only art worthy of praise; that thou art the first cause of all that is good, of all that is excellent, of all that is commendable on earth. We know also, that when one man is made to differ from another, it is through thy mercy and the blessed effect of superabounding grace; not according to his works or deservings, but according to thy free and sovereign pleasure. Nevertheless, we often blindly look to second causes, and lead others to do the same; sometimes setting up ourselves as idols for others, and sometimes making gods of our fellow-men. O Lord, we confess and bewail this our grievous offence, very earnestly entreating thee to give us grace henceforward, neither to covet for ourselves the commendations of our fellow-creatures, nor to mislead our brethren by the flatteries we offer them; since thou, O Lord, alone art worthy the praise and adoration of all thy creatures—for thou only art holy—thou only art just—thou only art good. Shed thy Holy Spirit abroad in our hearts, and we will shew forth thy praise. O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we

make mention of thy name. Thou art the God who hast revealed thyself, through thy Son, the God of mercy, the one only and true God. In thee alone, therefore, will we place our trust, upon thee alone will we build our hope, and unto thee alone shall our tribute of homage and adoration be paid without ceasing.

“And now to God the Father,” &c.

END OF VOL. II.









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